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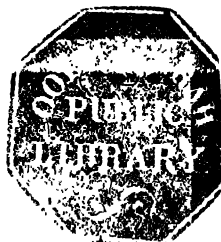
ROMANS UNDER THE EMPIRE.

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HISTORY

OF THE



ROMANS UNDER THE EMPIRE.

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BY

CHARLES MERIVALE, B.D.

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CHAPTER LV.

The emperor Nero: his figure and character.—The senate: reduced in numbers by proscription; lowered in estimation: impoverishment of the old families, but general increase of wealth in the upper ranks.—The commonalty divided into two classes.—The provincials: the prætorians: the legions.—Independence of the proconsuls.—Account of the government of Syria.—Exploits of Corbulo.—Nero visits Greece: his personal displays there.—Death of Corbulo.—Indignation of the Romans at Nero's self-abasement.—Vindex conspires against him.—Revolt of Galba and Virginius.—Galba proclaimed emperor by his soldiers.—Nero's return to Rome and triumphal entry.—His despicable pusillanimity.—His last hours and death. (A.D. 66, A.U. 819.—A.D. 68, A.U. 821.)

The account of Nero given by our authorities must be accepted as substantially correct.

BENEATH the ostensible records which have been left us of the last three Cæsars, we may seem to detect traces, as it were, now almost obliterated, of another and more legitimate writing. It may not be impossible, I conceive, to reconstruct the true character of Tiberius, by freeing it from the distortions of the glosses with which it has been overlaid. If there remain less distinct traces of the real portraiture of Caius and Claudius, we have discovered nevertheless unquestionable evidence of gross perversions of the truth, which must throw doubt on the genuineness of the lineaments in which they have been commonly presented. With regard to Nero, however, the case, it must be allowed, is different. The invalidation,

indeed, of the testimony of Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dion in the earlier instances renders them justly suspected in this also; the accounts of the two last-named writers especially seem in some respects quite incredible: nevertheless I am constrained to add that no outlines of a truer character are elsewhere discoverable, and with some allowance only for extravagance of colouring, we must accept in the main the verisimilitude of the picture they have left us of this arch-tyrant, the last and the most detestable of the Cæsarean family.

Description of his figure and dress.

The youth who at the age of seventeen years was called to govern the civilized world, is represented in his busts and medals as handsome in countenance, but, as Suetonius remarks, without grace or winningness of expression.[1] His hair was not the bright auburn of Apollo, the delight of the Romans, to which it was so often likened, but yellowish or sandy: his figure, though of middle stature, was ill-proportioned, the neck was thick and sensual, the stomach prominent, the legs slender. His skin, it is added, was blotched or pimpled; but this, it may be supposed, was the effect of intemperance in his later years; his eyes were dark gray or greenish, and their sight defective, which may account perhaps for the scowl which seems to mark their expression. His health, notwithstanding his excesses, continued good to the end, and it was only from anxious concern for his voice that he wrapped his throat in kerchiefs, like a confirmed valetudinarian.[2] In his dress there was a mixture

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 51.: "Vultu pulchro magis quam venusto." This distinction between "pulcher" and "venustus" is well supported from the authorities by Dœderlein. Comp. especially Catull. lxxxvi. On the passage in Suetonius he makes the comment: "d. h. er hatte mehr vollkommen und regelmässig schöne als angenehme Zuge, und war also eine herzlose kalte schönheit zu der sich niemand hingezogen fühlt." Dœderlein, *Latein. Synonym.* iii. 52.

[2] Suet. *l. c.*

of slovenliness and finery; in the arrangement of his cherished locks he was exceedingly careful, piling them in tiers above the crown, and letting them fall from thence over the shoulders, a fashion which was reputed not less indecent, or at least effeminate, than the looseness of his cincture, the bareness of his feet, and the lightness of the chamber-robe in which he did not scruple to appear in public.[1]

Nero's love of admiration.

We may trace perhaps to the character of his master, and to the kind of education he was likely to receive from him, the ardent love of admiration, ill-directed as it was, which distinguished the pupil of Seneca. To this constant anxiety to compete with rivals, and triumph over them, however trifling the objects on which it was exercised, may be ascribed the indifference Nero evidently felt to the title of divinity, which in his inordinate vanity he might have been expected to claim.[2] He wanted to be admired as the first among men, not to be adored as a god. He could not be Apollo, and contend at the same time for the prize of the Pythian games; he could not be Hercules, and carry off the chaplet at Nemea; he could not be Jupiter, and gain the victory at the great contest of Olympia;—distinctions on which his soul was bent

[1] Suet. *l.c.*: "Synthesinam indutus:" explained by the commentators by "vestem cubitoriam" (χιτώνιον ἄνθινον, Dion, lxiii. 13.), the "thalassina vestis," as I conceive, of Lucretius. The long loose robe was the garb also of the lyrist: "Statuas suas citharœdico habitu," &c. Suet. *Ner.* 25. Eckhel compares Virgil, *Æn.* vi. 645.:

"Necnon Threicius longa cum veste sacerdos
Obloquitur numeris septem discrimina vocum."

[2] We have seen how the proposal of Anicius Cerialis to erect a temple to Nero was repudiated. Tac. *Ann.* xv. ult. It should be remarked, however, that there are specimens of gold and silver medals, the imperial coinage, in which the head of Nero is encircled with rays. These may be regarded as an emblem of divinity, unless they are meant only to indicate his rivalry with the sun-god Apollo. See Eckhel, vi. 269. The bust of Nero in the Louvre is also radiated. Muller, *Archæol. der Kunst.* 198.

from an early period of his career, and which, as we shall see, he lived eventually to achieve. His courtiers might, if they pleased, pronounce his likeness to these or any other divinities; but to make him actually divine was to rob him of the honours he so vehemently affected. The poets might predict his apotheosis after death, and doubtless the verses in which Lucan, at that time his friend and companion, challenged him to choose what godship he would assume in heaven, and where he would fix his throne; imploring him to take his seat in the middle of the universe, lest if he leaned ever so little from the centre the world should be thrown by his august weight from its eternal balance;—such verses were doubtless accepted as a fitting tribute to the germ of a divine existence hereafter to blossom into flower.[1] But the ardour with which Nero aspired to distinctions among mortal men was itself a guarantee against his usurping the character of the impassive godhead, which can neither enjoy a triumph nor suffer a disgrace.

[1] Lucan, i. 45.:

"Te, cum statione peracta
Astra petes serus, prælati regia cœli.
Accipiet, guadente polo: seu sceptra tenere,
Seu te flammigeros Phœbi conscendere currus,
Telluremque nihil mutato Sole timentem
Igne vago lustrare juvet; tibi numine ab omni
Cedetur, jurisque tui Natura relinquet
Quis Deus esse velis, ubi regnum ponere mundi. . . . .
Ætheris immensi partem si presseris unam
Sentiet axis onus; librati pondera cœli
Orbe tene medio."

In the fragment ascribed to the poet Turnus, the Muses are accused of prostituting themselves to Nero, and paying him divine honours:

"Ques genus ab Jove summo,
Asse merent vili, ac sancto se corpore fœdant . . . .
Proh! Furias et monstra colunt . . . et quicquid Olympi est
Transcripsere Erebo. Jamque impia ponere templa
Sacrilegasque audent aras, cœloque repulsos
Quondam Terrigenas superis imponere regnis
Qua licet; et stolido verbis illuditur orbi."

Nor again, though described by Tacitus as *lusting after the incredible*, had Nero the same passion as Caius for realizing apparent impossibilities to prove this superhuman power.[1] He was not impelled in a career of marvels by restless and aimless pride. Once removed from the sphere of theatrical shows and contests, he had no higher notion of his position than as enabling him to accumulate, to multiply, or to enlarge the commonest objects of luxury. He never travelled, it is asserted, with less than a thousand carriages in his train. His banquets were those of the noble debauchees of the day on a still vaster scale of expense: in the height of his extravagance, he would equip his actors with masks or wands covered with genuine pearls; he would stake four hundred thousand sesterces on a single cast of the dice; he bathed in unguents, and stimulated his friends to expend four millions on the perfumes alone of a single supper.[2] His presents to favourites were sums of money so many times greater than had ever been given to favourites before[3]; his buildings were colonnades longer, halls wider, towers higher than had been raised by his predecessors. His projected canal from Puteoli to Rome would only have been the longest of canals; the attempt he latterly made to cut through the isthmus of Corinth was only a repetition of previous attempts, neither better planned, nor more steadfastly persevered in. In his schemes there was nothing new or original. Nero was devoid of the

His vulgar ideas of magnificence.

[1] Tacitus calls him "incredibilium cupitor," *Ann.* xv. 42., specially with reference to his project of a canal from Avernus to Ostia. He seems greatly to exaggerate the difficulties of the undertaking; perhaps his best comment upon it is: "nec satis causæ."

[2] Suet. *Ner.* 27.; Plin. *Hist. Nat.* xxxvii. 6.; Oros. vii. 7.

[3] Nero, it is said, threw in his lifetime as much as 2200 millions of sesterces (17,600,000*l.*) to his courtiers and freedmen. Tac. *Hist.* i. 20. He covered the theatre of Pompeius with gilding in one day, to exhibit it to his royal visitor Tiridates. Plin. *H.N.* xxxiii. 16.

imagination which throws an air of wild grandeur over the character of Caius. The notion that he burnt Rome on purpose to have an opportunity of rebuilding it more magnificently would have been more applicable, as it seems to me, to his predecessor than to him. But within the paltry sphere of his degraded taste he claimed to be preeminent. As a mime or player he was not satisfied with any single class of parts, or any one department of exhibition.

His taste for personal display unrestrained by a sense of decency.

After rivalling Apollo in song and the Sun in charioteering, he aspired to display the courage and vigour of Hercules, and a lion was duly prepared, drugged or fed to stupor, to be strangled in his arms, or brained with a stroke of his club.[1] He acted, he sang, he played, he danced. He insisted on representing men and heroes, gods and even goddesses. To affect the woman indeed, in dress, voice, and gesture, was a transformation in which he took a childish pleasure, restrained by no sense of dignity or decency.

His superstition.

He adopted his superstitions, as well as his garb and habits, from Syria, from his Parthian and Armenian guests, or from the diviners and necromancers of the credulous East. To the art of magic he devoted wealth, energy, natural abilities, in short, all his resources; but Nature, says Pliny, was too strong for him.[2] His failure to divine the future, or raise the spirits of the dead, was noted by the wise as a signal demonstration of the futility of magical pretensions. For none of the accustomed divinities of Rome did he evince any respect, nor for places consecrated by the national religion; but he reverenced the Syrian Astarte, till in a fit of vexation he renounced her

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 53.

[2] Suet. *Ner.* 34.: "Quin et facto per Magos sacro evocare manes et exorare tentavit." Plin. *Hist. Nat.* xxx. 5.: "Imperare Dis concupivit. . . . . ad hæc non opes ei defuere, non vires, non discentis ingenium, aliaque, non patiente mundo. Immensum et indubitatum exemplum est falsæ artis quam dereliquit Nero."

protection, and insulted her image. At last his sole object of veneration was a little figure of a girl, which he always wore as a talisman about him, and affected to learn from it the secrets of futurity.[1]

Such were the miserable interests of this infatuated creature, the victim of licentious indulgence, a child prematurely stunted both in mind and body, surrounded on the throne not by generals and statesmen, but by troops of slaves or freedmen, by players and dancers lost to all sense of decency themselves, and seeking only their advancement at the expense of their master and of mankind; surrendered by loose women to still more despicable minions, and ruled by the most cruel and profligate of ministers. Helius and Tigellinus, Doryphorus and Sporus, are among the most hateful names of the imperial history; into the abominations of their career it would be pollution merely to look. No wonder that, when encircled by so loathsome a crew, he saw the proud citizens prostrate at his feet, he could exclaim that no prince before him had known the extent of his power.[2] But though at their patron's command statues and arches might rise in honour of these infamous companions, it may be said for the credit of the people, that they received much less of lip-worship than their predecessors, Sejanus, Pallas, and Narcissus. There seems indeed to have risen, at least in the later years of this principate, a marked separation between the court and the nobility; the senators shrank from

Nero's unworthy favourites despised and shunned by the nobles.

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 56.: "Religionum usquequaque contemptor, præter unius Deæ Syriæ. Hanc mox ita sprevit, ut urina contaminaret. . . . icunculam puellarem colere perseveravit." Tacitus relates, *Ann.* xiv. 22, how Nero bathed from mere caprice in the spring of the Aqua Marcia, which was declared sacred, doubtless to protect from impurities the water to be drunk at Rome. A sickness which followed was ascribed to the anger of the Nymph.

[2] Suet. *Ner.* 37.: "Elatus, inflatusque . . . . negavit quemquam principum scisse quid sibi liceret."

the presence of a man who so openly degraded his name and lineage; they fled the contact of his dissolute associates; they entered into wide-spread conspiracies against him, to which they had never been provoked by the tyranny of his predecessors; and they had the merit of incurring his petulant displeasure, with many a threat to extinguish their order altogether, and give the provinces to his knights and freedmen. *I hate you, Cæsar*, exclaimed the most refined of his flatterers, *because you are a senator*.[1] Accordingly this emperor, notwithstanding the pomp and splendour of his shows and public appearances, seems to have been left for the most part to the mercenary attendance of his personal favourites, protected only by a troop of spies and informers, and the vilest portion of the pampered populace, from the general detestation of respectable citizens.[2]

His cruelties capricious, not politic.

The cruelties of Nero's later years were the more fearful perhaps from their apparent caprice. He had no politic object, such as may be ascribed to Tiberius; of policy indeed he was incapable. Except that his murders were commonly prompted by need or fear, and therefore fell oftenest on the rich and powerful, it can hardly be said that one class suffered from them more terribly than another. His family, his friends, the senators, the knights, philosophers, and Christians, Romans and provincials, were all decimated by them. The natural tenderness of his timid and pliant conscience once seared by crime, there remained no moral strength to resist any evil suggestion; his conduct

[1] Vatinius in Dion, lxiii. 15.: μισῶ σε, Καῖσαρ, ὅτι συγκλητικὸς εἶ. Comp. Suet. *Ner.* 37.

[2] Strange stories are told of the efforts Nero made to retain the better portion of the citizens as spectators of his entertainments, which they found, it is said, insufferably tedious. See Dion, *l.c.*: ὥστε τινὰς . . . . προσποιεῖσθαί τε ἐκθνήσκειν, καὶ νεκρῶν δίκην ἐκ τῶν θεάτρων ἐκφέρεσθαι. But we may hope there was some moral indignation in their disgust.

was that of mere selfish instinct, without an emotion of pity or compunction. Even the terrors of guilt touched him lightly and passed away rapidly.

Proscriptions of the senate.

Undoubtedly, however, the senate furnished the longest list of victims to the tyrant's barbarity. The greatest and noblest were the most exposed to the prince's evil eye, which lighted upon them equally at public ceremonials and private receptions, and marked them for immolation at every fresh burst of ill-humour. The proscriptions to which this body was subjected under the four Claudian Cæsars reduced its numbers considerably, more indeed, it may be imagined, than was replaced by the ordinary sources of replenishment. Claudius, among his other reforms, sought to restore the balance by a special measure, and such was probably the object of his revision of the senate, the last of the kind we read of; but the decline must have been accelerated under Nero, without check or counteraction. Nero, reckless equally of the past and future, felt no anxiety to maintain the numbers of that historic assembly; and the various causes, besides the emperor's tyranny, which were always at work to extinguish the oldest families, must have acted with terrible force on the effete branches of the ancient aristocracy. But if its numbers were reduced, no less were its employments also. Under the lax discipline of Nero and Tigellinus appointments to office abroad would be the prize of interest and favour, guided neither by routine nor by discretion; at home the boards and commissions established by Augustus would fall into disuse. Pensions and sinecures, though such corruptions are not known to us at Rome by name, would doubtless abound, but of real business there would be less and less. Intrigue and peculation would flourish in a soil protected from the air of public opinion, and the strong hand of central control. The passive endurance

Its numbers reduced under the tyranny of the Claudian Cæsars.

which marked the conduct of the senate under the imperial persecutions seems to bespeak a consciousness of its own guilt towards the state, and it compounded for its monopoly of unquestioned abuses by bowing to the yoke of a jealous and domineering master. We discover in Seneca no reliance on the senate. He never speaks of it as a living guardian of the virtues of Roman society. And yet, notwithstanding this abandonment of its high prerogative, it still exercised a moral power. Its mere title could awaken associations which thrilled from pulse to pulse. It was still regarded by the men of ancient name and blood as the true head or heart of the empire, rather than the upstart Claudius or Domitius, who might wear the purple and wield the sword. To the men of words and phrases the emperor was still an accident, —the senate was an eternal fact,—at a time when rhetoric might make revolutions, though it could not regenerate society. To them it was still the symbol of liberty, at a time when liberty and Cæsar were regarded as two gladiators sword in hand, pitted against each other in mortal combat.[1] This venerable image of its ancient majesty was preserved to it by the proscriptions themselves by which it suffered; for as often as a murdered Scribonius or Pompeius was replaced in the chairs of office by a Rubellius, a Lollius, or a Vitellius, the principle of its vitality was in fact invigorated by the infusion of new plebeian blood.[2]

Its estimation lowered in the eye of the citizens.

[1] Lucan, vii. 694.:

> "Non jam Pompeii nomen populare per orbem,
> Nec studium belli; sed par quod semper habemus
> Libertas et Cæsar erunt."

[2] Champagny gives a list of the new consular families of the period of the Cæsars: "the Ælia, Annæa, Arruntia, Asinia, Cocceia, Hateria, Junia, Lollia, Memmia, Octavia, Plautia, Pomponia, Poppæa, Rubellia, Salvia, Silia, Vipsania, Vitellia, Volusia. From henceforth

As fast indeed as the tyrant's exigencies required the confiscation of the great estates of nobles, and the overthrow of great families, his caprice and favour were elevating new men from the inferior orders to succeed to their distinctions, and to rival them in their vast possessions. Nero never kept his money. All he robbed, all he extorted, was squandered as abruptly as it was acquired, and shrewd Roman money-makers were always waiting upon his necessities, and sweeping the properties of his victims into their stores for a small part of their value in specie. Of the vast sums amassed by the freedmen of Claudius and his successors some records have been preserved to us; but the freedmen were a class peculiarly obnoxious to remark, and it is probable that knights and senators were at the same time, and by similar compliances, raising fortunes not less enormous, who have escaped the designating finger of history. Though the grinding processes to which the colossal properties of the nobles were subjected must on the whole have broken down the average amount of their revenues far below the rate at which it figured under the republic and the first Cæsars, we must not suppose that the current set all in one direction, or that the age of Claudius and Nero was not also a period of great private accumulations. The wealth of individuals and of the upper ranks at Rome generally reached perhaps its greatest height at this culminating epoch.

Impoverishment of the old families.

But general increase of wealth in the upper classes.

Descending, however, from the high places of the Roman world, we find beneath them a commonalty suffering also a social revolution, undergoing a rapid transition, and presenting the elements of two rival classes, or even

The commonalty divided into two classes.

we lose sight of many famous names of the republic; such as the Atilia, Fulvia, Horatia, Hortensia, Hostilia, Livia, Lucretia, Papiria, Porcia, Postumia, Veturia."

hostile camps, in the bosom of the city. The clients and retainers of the old nobility, whether freed or free born, still formed the pith and marrow of the commonwealth: still leaning their humble tenements against the great lords' mansions, still respecting them as their patrons and advisers, still attending their levees, and waiting for the daily compliment of the *sportula* at their doors, they regarded them as the real chiefs of the state, and held them equals of Cæsar himself. The death or exile of their august protector might strike them with surprise and indignation; but when they looked around and counted their numbers, they felt their own insignificance, and quailed beneath the blow in silence. They saw that there was growing up beside them a vast class of patronless proletaries, the scum of the streets and lanes, slaves, freedmen, foreigners, men of base trades and infamous employments, or of ruined fortunes, who, having none but Cæsar himself to depend on, threw the weight of their numbers in his scale, and earned his doles and entertainments by lavish caresses, and deeds corresponding to their promises.[1] These have been called the lazzaroni of ancient Rome: in idleness, indeed, and mendicancy they deserve the title; but they were the paupers of a world-wide empire, and the crumbs on which they fed fell from the tables of kings and princes. The wealth of millions of subjects was lavished on these mendicant masters. For days together, on the oft-recurring occasion of an imperial festival, valuables of all kinds were thrown pell-mell

1. The clients of the old nobility.

2. The patronless proletaries: the lazzaroni of ancient Rome.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 4. (a precious passage, as Champagny justly terms it, in which the historian marks this distinction of classes in the populace): "Pars populi integra et magnis domibus annexa, clientes libertique damnatorum et exsulum: . . . . plebs sordida et circo ac theatris sueta, simul deterrimi servorum, aut qui adesis bonis per dedecus Neronis alebantur."

among them, rare and costly birds were lavished upon them by thousands, provisions of every kind, costly robes, gold and silver, pearls and jewels, pictures, slaves, and horses, and even tamed beasts of prey: at last, in the progress of this wild profusion, ships, houses, and estates were bestowed by lottery on these waiters upon Cæsar's providence.[1] This extravagance was retained without relaxation throughout Nero's reign: had he paused in it for a moment the days of his power would have been few. The rumour that he was about to quit Rome for the East caused murmurs of discontent, and forced him to consult the gods, and pretend to be deterred by signs of their displeasure from carrying his design into effect.[2] When at last, as we shall see, he actually visited Greece, he left behind him a confidential minister, to keep the stream of his liberality flowing, at whatever cost and by whatever measures of spoliation. Absent or present, he flung to these pampered supporters a portion of every confiscated fortune; the emperor and his people hunted together, and the division of the prey was made apparently to the satisfaction of both equally. Capricious as were the blows he dealt around him, this class alone he took care never to offend, and even the charge of firing the city fell lightly on the ears of an almost houseless multitude, whose losses at least had been fully compensated by plunder. The clients of the condemned nobles were kept effectually in check by this hungry crowd, yelling over every carcass with the prospect of a feast. Nero, in the height of his tyranny and alarm, had no need to increase the number of his prætorians: the lazzaroni of Rome were a body-guard surrounding him in every public place, and watching the entrances and exits at his palace gates.

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 11.; Dion, lxi. 18.

[2] Tac. *Ann.* xv. 36.: "Deseruit inceptum. . . . . Hæc atque talia plebi volentia fuere voluptatum cupidine," &c.

The provincials, or subjects of Rome.

Such were the chief distinctions of class at this period among the Roman people, the so-called lords of mankind, and beyond them lay the great world of the provincials, their subjects. But if these were subjects in name, they were now become in fact the true Roman people; they alone retained real freedom of action within the limits of the empire; they were allowed to labour, and they enjoyed the bulk at least of the fruits of industry; they rarely saw the hateful presence of the emperor, and knew only by report the loathsome character of his courtiers and their orgies. And if sometimes the thunderbolt might fall among them, it struck only the highest eminences; the multitude was safe as it was innocent. The extortion of the proconsul in the province was not to be compared in wantonness or severity with the reckless pillage of the emperor in the capital, nearer home. The petulance of a proconsul's wife was hardly tolerated abroad, while at home the prince's worst atrocities were stimulated by female cupidity. The taxation of the subject, if heavier in some respects than that of the citizen, was at least tolerably regular: the extraordinary demands which Nero made towards the rebuilding of Rome were an exception to the routine of fiscal imposts. But, above all, the provincials had changed place with their masters in being now the armed force of the empire. The citizen had almost ceased to wield the sword. Even the prætorians were recruited from Italy, not from Rome herself; and among them thousands were doubtless foreign-born, the offscourings of the provinces, who had thrown themselves on the shores of Italy to seek their fortunes in a sphere abandoned by the indolence of their masters. The prætorian, like the proletary of the city, was highly cherished by the emperor. He had his rights and privileges which raised him above every other mili-

The prætorians recruited in Italy.

tary conscript. While the legionary served at ten ases a day for thirty or forty years exposed to the risk of war, fatigue, and climate, nor regained his liberty and safety till age had blanched his hair and stiffened his limbs, the prætorian lived quietly at Rome under the lax discipline of a stative camp; he enjoyed double pay, and claimed dismissal after sixteen years' service. He had his regular dole of corn, his occasional largess, his extraordinary donative whenever an opportunity had occurred to prove his fidelity. Tiberius, on the fall of Sejanus, had given him 1000 ases; Claudius had paid for the purple with a sum of 150 millions of sesterces; Nero had followed these examples and established them as the rule of the succession: on the overthrow of Piso's conspiracy he had requited his prætorians with 2000 sesterces apiece.[1] Thus caressed, the favoured cohorts of the guard became the firmest support of the prince their creature, and under the sway of military traditions, from which even they were not exempt, regarded their oath of allegiance with strict fidelity. This fidelity, indeed, they considered due to the imperator himself rather than to the senate and people, whom they equally despised: they were satisfied with the power of making the Cæsars, and as yet were far from conceiving in their minds the idea of unmaking them again.

The legions recruited in the provinces.

But far different was the case with the legions in the provinces. The legionary was still less Roman than the prætorian. If to a great extent the recruits for the frontier camps were still levied from the class which possessed the nominal franchise of the city, yet these citizens were themselves, for the most part, new-enfranchised provincials; they had received Latin or Roman rights as a boon from the emperor, or perhaps purchased

[1] Suet. *Tib.* 36., *Claud.* 10., *Ner.* 10.; Tac. *Ann.* xv. 72.

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them for the sake of their fiscal immunities. Romans in blood or even Italians the legionaries no longer were. They were supported by ample levies of auxiliaries, avowedly of foreign extraction, generally transferred from their homes to a camp at a far distant station; Silures and Brigantes to the Danube; Tungri and Suevi to the borders of Wales; Iberians to the Euphrates, Numidians to the Rhine. Amidst the clang of dissonant languages that resounded through the camp the Latin was the least heard and understood.[1] Yet the word of command was still Roman, and the chief officers were Romans also: the affections of this soldiery, long estranged from the emperor and the senate, were attached to the tribune and the legatus: and the murmurs of the nobles at home, which moved the sympathy of their kinsmen on the frontier, met a deep response in the devotion of these sons of the eagles to their accustomed leaders. The vast distance of the great camps of the empire from one another, and the frequent change of their officers, together with the motives of jealousy which the emperors nourished between them, helped to prevent these legions from joining in a common cause when disaffection menaced an outbreak in any particular quarter.[2] They made some partial attempts to supplant the prætorians by carrying one of their own chiefs to power; but every endeavour of the kind had been hitherto baffled by the want of concert among them.

Independent position of the proconsuls.

While, however, the emperor's power was thus firmly rooted in the capital, the blow which was at last to overwhelm him was slowly preparing in the provinces. The policy of the first Cæsars, which, in order to repress popular

[1] The military inscriptions, such as those on the Roman walls in the north of Britain, from which chiefly these facts are elicited, are generally of a later date than that we are now considering. To this subject I shall have occasion to revert hereafter.

[2] Thus Tacitus remarks, *Hist.* i. 9.: "Longis spatiis discreti exercitus, quod saluberrimum est ad continendam fidem."

excitement at the seat of government, had renounced the maxim of the free state, that office should be held only for a limited term, had raised, in fact, a number of vice-Cæsars to the dependent thrones of the provincial governments. On the Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates, and on a smaller scale at the centre of each proconsular jurisdiction, a Roman senator, generally of high birth and hereditary wealth, held the place of the imperator at the head of the armies, and of the whole civil and financial establishment. In this arduous position his hands were at least unfettered. He quitted Rome attended by friends of his own choosing; neither prince nor senate interfered with his appointments. No council at his seat of government, under pretence of assisting, had the power of controlling him. Throughout the extent of his province the word of the proconsul was law. The prætor's edict did not run beyond Rome and Italy. If in ordinary transactions between Romans the body of Roman law was held nominally in force, the master of the sword, so far removed from all supervision, was actually paramount, and the judicial officers, under his appointment and control, were simply interpreters of his will. Without a senate, without a public opinion, with hardly a tradition of government to check him, the ruler of Gaul and Syria was really more an emperor than the emperor himelf. Dismissing from his mind, as much as possible, the thought of Cæsar's wrath, as of a capricious Nemesis which might at any moment be raised against him, he enjoyed the favours of fortune to the full, and compensated himself for the risks of his position by its substantial advantages.

Their government less tyrannical than that of the emperors at Rome.

It would be idle to suppose that the independence of the great captains in the provinces would be exercised without a large amount of deliberate or wanton tyranny. But the murmurs of the provincials have been sup-

pressed, their complaints have been buried in oblivion. That from time to time a vicious proconsul was still accused by his subjects and condemned by an equitable emperor we learn from a few incidental notices: more than once a corner of the veil is raised, and we read, as in Palestine especially, of their violence and cruelty: nevertheless, on the whole, the balance of testimony seems to show that the provinces were governed more mildly than could have been anticipated, more mildly than the capital itself. The reason seems to be this, that while the excesses of the emperors at Rome were generally caused by personal fear, and often designed to stifle the first murmurs of discontent, in the provinces the governors had no such enemies to apprehend, while no severity towards their dependents could protect them against their only enemy, the emperor himself. The proconsuls, moreover, were always men of high character and standing, experienced in government, trained by discipline and accustomed to self-control; they were not mere striplings elevated by court favour, without preparation for their arduous employment, without habits either of obedience or command. The history of the world presents us, perhaps, with no such succession of able captains and administrators, as the long series of the governors of Syria or Macedonia: we can only regret that our acquaintance with them is so imperfect, that the lines of their policy are often to be traced for the most part by conjecture and inference. Above all, however, it may be remarked that loyalty to the commonwealth was still the leading idea in the mind of the proconsul: he regarded himself strictly as the instrument of her behests; he acted with a single eye to her interest, barring only a certain amount of licensed profit for himself; while, as the sworn lieutenant of the imperator at home, he considered the commonwealth as centred in the imperial person.

By careful examination of the authorities, it has been found possible to make a complete list of the governors of the great province of Syria, the importance of which in Roman history has been so often indicated.[1] After the death of Germanicus, in 772, his officers, while awaiting the pleasure of Tiberius, desired Sentius Saturninus to act as legatus of the imperator. This of course did not constitute an appointment to the proconsulship which Piso had vacated, nor do we hear that Tiberius regarded it as a recommendation. But he was unwilling perhaps to offend a powerful soldiery by openly repudiating their choice, or he shrank from conferring upon any one the full powers of the Syrian prefecture. Accordingly the next governor, Ælius Lamia, seems to have been retained at home, while the province was administered for several years by the chiefs of the four legions quartered within it. Lamia was succeeded by Pomponius Flaccus, who once more united the province under a single ruler, and died in the year 786. Upon this vacancy the carelessness, or more probably the jealousy, of the emperor allowed the province to remain for two years

List of the proconsuls of Syria.

[1] See the elaborate and interesting dissertation of Augustus Zumpt (*Comm. Epigraph.* ii. 73—150.). I give here his list of proconsuls, with their dates:—

	B.C.	A.U.
Q. Didius . . .	30	724
M. Messala Corvinus	29	725
M. Tullius Cicero .	28	726
A. Terentius Murena	28	726
C. Sentius Saturninus	26	728
M. Agrippa . .	23	731
M. Titius . . .	13	741
C. Sentius Saturninus	9	745
P. Quintilius Varus .	6	748
P. Sulpicius Quirinius	4	750
M. Lollius . .	1	753
	A.D.	
C. Marcius Censorinus	3	756
L. Volusius Saturninus	4	757

	A.D.	A.U.
P. Sulpicius Quirinius	6	759
Q. Cæcilius Silanus .	11	764
Cn. Calpurnius Piso .	17	770
L. Ælius Lamia .	21	774
L. Pomponius Flaccus	32	785
L. Vitellius . .	35	788
P. Petronius . .	39	792
C. Vibius Marsus .	42	795
C. Cassius Longinus .	45	798
C. Ummidius Quadratus	50	803
Domitius Corbulo .	61	814
C. Cestius Gallus .	63	816
C. Licinius Mucianus	66	819

without a superior governor. Tiberius pretended indeed that no senator of sufficient authority would quit the dissipations of the capital for the viceregal splendours of the East.[1] The excuse was too transparent to impose on any one. But the urgency of affairs on the oft-disturbed frontier compelled him at last to supply the vacancy, and L. Vitellius, to whom Syria was assigned in 788, seems to have been one of the ablest as well as the noblest of the senatorial order. This proconsul continued to govern through the earlier years of Caius, till he gave offence by hesitating to enforce the worship of the emperor upon the Jews. Certainly Vitellius, the worshipper himself of Caius, and the devoted flatterer of Messalina, had no scruples of pride or religion: but, good soldier and administrator as he was, he shrank from a wanton insult which would infallibly lead to a revolt.[2] Petronius, who succeeded him, allowed the affair to linger under various excuses, and the last letter, requiring him to proceed in its execution without further delay, reached him fortunately at the same moment with the news of the emperor's death. Petronius was apparently an old familiar of Claudius, and was permitted to retain the government for some years under the new Cæsar.[3] He was followed by Vibius Marsus, one of the few friends of Germanicus, who had preserved, after his patron's death, the favour of Tiberius, and had been suffered to pass three years in the government of Africa.[4] The next

[1] Tac. *Ann.* vi. 27.; Zumpt, p. 135.

[2] Tacitus says of him, vi. 32.: "Regendis provinciis prisca virtute egisse." For his recall by Caius, see Joseph. *Antiq.* xviii. 8. 2. A. U. 793.

[3] This Petronius, called Publius by Josephus and Philo, seems to be the same described by Seneca in his satire on the death of Claudius, as "vetus convictor ejus," and "homo Claudiana lingua disertus." He must have held the government of Syria till 742. Zumpt, p. 136., from Eckhel, iii. 280.

[4] Eckhel, iv. 147., in Zumpt, *l.c.*

in succession, C. Cassius Longinus, is a splendid example of the character and position which were held to qualify for this exalted sovereignty. This man was descended from the family of the Liberator, who was hardly less distinguished for his victories over the Parthians than for his defence of Roman freedom. He had obtained the consulship under Tiberius, but his renown as the chief of a sect among the jurists of his age recommended him, under Claudius, to the still higher honours of the proconsulate. For five years Syria was ruled by Cassius: after his retirement from the province he lost his sight, but his reputation sufficed of itself to excite the jealousy of Nero, who banished him to Sardinia in the year 818.[1] From 803 to 814 the government was held by Ummidius Quadratus, the first of the series of Syrian proconsuls that died in office. He owed his long tenure to the fact that Anteius, designed by Nero for his successor, was an object of suspicion at court as a friend of Agrippina.[2]

Annexation of Judæa to the province of Syria.

During the last two proconsulates the prefecture of Syria had acquired its greatest extension. On the death of Herod Agrippa in 797, his kingdom of Judea had been definitively annexed to the empire, and was subjected, as once before, to an imperial procurator, who, while he derived his fiscal and civil authority directly from the emperor, and acted in a manner as his viceroy, was nevertheless placed under the military control of the proconsul.[3] Under court protection some of

[1] Tac. *Ann.* xvi. 7.; Suet. *Ner.* 37. He was eventually recalled from exile by Vespasian: Pompon. *de Orig. Juris.* in *Dig.* i. 2. 47.

[2] Zumpt on Tac. *Ann.* xiii. 22., xvi. 14.

[3] Tacitus, *Ann.* xii. 60.: "Sæpius audita vox principis (Claudii), parem vim rerum habendam a procuratoribus suis judicatarum ac si ipse statuisset." The powers of the procurator were thus extended from matters of revenue to justice and administration. He was checked, however, by the presence of a legatus with an armed force, representing the proconsul, in his district. The general character of

the Judean procurators, especially the infamous Felix, the brother of Pallas, and his partner in the favour of Claudius, had indulged in every excess, till the spirit of revolt already roused by the threats of Caius broke out in fierce but desultory acts of violence. These indeed had been repressed with the sternness of Rome, not unmingled with some features of barbarity peculiar to the East.[1] Nevertheless the government had resented the tyranny of its own officers, which had caused this dangerous insubordination, and Quadratus had himself condemned from his tribunal the indiscretion of the procurator Cumanus.[2] While, however, the authority of the Syrian proconsul was thus extended over the region of Palestine in the south, a portion of his northern dependencies was taken from him and erected for a time into a separate prefecture. In the year 808 the brave Domitius Corbulo, recalled from his German command, was deputed to maintain the majesty of the empire in the face of the Parthians, and defend Armenia from the intrigues or violence with which they continued to menace it. The forces of Rome in the East were now divided between Quadratus and Corbulo. To the proconsul of Syria were left two legions with their auxiliaries, to the new commander were assigned the other two, while the frontier tributaries were ordered to serve in either camp, as the policy of the empire should require.[3] While such

the Judean procurators is described from a single instance by Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 9.: "Claudius, defunctis regibus aut ad modicum redactis, Judæam provinciam equitibus Rom. aut libertis permisit, e quibus Antonius Felix per omnem sævitiam ac libidinem jus regium servili ingenio exercuit."

[1] The horrid death by crucifixion, which in the West was the punishment of slaves only, was inflicted without scruple on the rebellious Jews.

[2] Joseph. *Antiq. Jud.* xx. 6. 3.; Tac. *Ann.* xii. 54, from which passage it appears that the proconsul of Syria was supreme over the imperial procurator in Judea.

[3] Tac. *Ann.* xiii. 8.: "Domitium Corbulonem retinendæ Armeniæ

was the distribution of the troops, the territory itself was divided by the line of the Taurus: Cappadocia, together with Galatia, was intrusted to Corbulo, and constituted a separate province. Here he raised the levies he required to replace the lazy veterans who had vitiated the Syrian legions; and here, having further strengthened himself from the German camps, this stern reviver of discipline prepared his men, amidst the rocks and snows, to penetrate the fastnesses of Armenia, and dislodge the Parthians from the gorges of Ararat and Elbrouz.[1] Tiridates, the Parthian pretender to the throne of Armenia, in vain opposed him with arms and treachery. The Romans advanced to the walls of Artaxata, which they stormed and burnt; an exploit, the glory of which was usurped by Nero himself, the senate voting supplications in his honour, and consecrating day after day to the celebration of his victory, till Cassius ventured to demand a limit to such ruinous profusion.[2] The war however was still prolonged through a second and a third campaign: the Hyrcanians on the banks of the Caspian and Aral—so far-reaching was the machinery put in motion by Corbulo—were encouraged to divert the Parthians from assisting Tiridates; and communications were held with them by the route of the Red Sea and the deserts of Beloochistan. At last the Armenian Tigranes, long retained in custody at Rome, was placed by the proconsul on the throne of his ancestors.[3] Some

Campaigns of Corbulo.

A. D. 58.
A. U. 811.

præposuerat . . . Copiæ Orientis ita dividuntur . . . Socii reges, prout bello conduceret, parere jussi: sed studia eorum in Corbulonem promptiora erant."

[1] The rigours of winter in this elevated and inclement region, the land of Kars and Erzeroum, which have acquired such notoriety in our own day, are painted with terrible force by Tacitus. *Ann.* xiii. 35.

[2] Tac. *Ann.* xiii. 41.: "C. Cassius . . . disseruit . . . oportere dividi sacros et negotiosos dies, queis divina colerent et humana non impedirent."

[3] Tac. *Ann.* xiv. 25, 26.: "Pars Armeniæ, ut cuique finitima,

portions of his patrimony, however, were now attached to the sovereignties of Pontus and Cappadocia; a Roman force was left in garrison at Tigranocerta, to support his precarious power; and on the death of Quadratus, Corbulo, having achieved the most brilliant successes in the East of any Roman since Pompeius, claimed the whole province of Syria and the entire administration of affairs on the Parthian frontier, as his legitimate reward.[1]

The position of Corbulo becomes formidable to Nero.

The union of these wide regions once more under a single ruler, so contrary, as it would appear, to the emperor's natural policy, was extorted perhaps from the fears of Nero, not indeed by actual threats, but by the formidable attitude of his general. An emperor, still a youth, who had seen no service himself, and had only caught at the shadows of military renown cast on him by his lieutenants, may have felt misgivings at the greatness of the real chiefs of his legions. It was from this jealousy, perhaps, that the career of conquest in Britain was so suddenly checked after the victory of Suetonius. The position indeed of Corbulo, the successor of Agrippa and Germanicus, might seem beyond the emperor's reach. It could only be balanced by creating similar positions in other quarters, and the empire was, in fact, at this moment virtually divided among three or four great commanders, any one of whom was leader of more numerous forces than could be mustered to oppose him at the seat of government. Nero was well aware of his danger; but he had not the courage to insist, on this occasion, on the division of Syria into two prefectures. He took, as we shall see, a baser precaution, and already perhaps contemplated the assas-

Pharasmania Polemonique, et Aristobulo atquei Antiocho, parere jussæ."

[1] Tac. *Ann.* xiv. 26.: "Corbulo in Syriam abscessit, morte Ummidii legati vacuam et sibi permissam."

sination of the lieutenant whom he dared not control. It was from Corbulo himself that the proposal came for at least a temporary division. That gallant general, a man of antique devotion to military principles, had no views of personal aggrandizement. When the Parthians, again collecting their forces, made a simultaneous attack on both Armenia and Syria, Corbulo declared that the double war required the presence of two chiefs of equal authority. He desired that the province beyond the Taurus should again be made a separate government.[1] Assuming in person the defence of the Syrian frontier with three legions, he transferred Cappadocia and Galatia, with an equal force, to Cæsennius Pætus, who repaid his generosity by reflecting on the presumed slowness of his operations.[2] But Pætus was as incapable as he was vain. Having advanced into Armenia, he was shut up in one of its cities with two legions, by a superior force, constrained to implore aid from Corbulo, and at last, when the distance and difficulty of the way precluded the possibility of succour, to capitulate ignominiously. Vologesus, king of Parthia, refrained from proceeding to extremities, and treating the humbled foe as his ancestor had treated Crassus.[3] He pretended to desire only a fair arrangement of the points in dispute between the rival empires; and Pætus, having promised that pending this settlement the legions should be withdrawn from Armenia, was suffered, though not without previous indignities, to march out of his captured stronghold, and retire in haste within the

A.D. 62.
A.U. 815.

[1] Tac. *Ann.* xv. 3. 6.

[2] Tac. *Ann.* xv. 6.: "Pætus . . . . . despiciebat gesta nihil, cædis aut prædæ . . . . . dictitans." But Tacitus himself had said of Corbulo, "bellum habere quam gerere malebat."

[3] A terrible rumour reached Rome that the legions had been made to pass under the yoke. Tac. *Ann.* xv. 15. Suetonius speaks of it as a fact, I have no doubt erroneously. *Ner.* 39.

frontiers.[1] Arrived there, Corbulo treated him with scornful forbearance; but the emperor recalled him from his post, and the combined forces of the province were once more entrusted to the only man capable of retrieving the disaster.[2] Corbulo penetrated into the heart of Armenia by the road which Lucullus had formerly opened; but the enemy declined to encounter him. Even on the spot of his ally's recent triumphs, Tiridates bowed to the demands of the proconsul, and consented to lay his diadem at the feet of the emperor's image, and go to Rome to receive it back from his hands.[3] The claims of the puppet Tigranes were eventually set aside, and while Tiridates did homage for his kingdom to Nero, he was suffered to place himself really under the protection of Vologesus.

A.D. 63. A.U. 816. Probable object of Nero's proposed visit to the East.

In the year 816 (A.D. 63), the period of these transactions, Nero, we are told, was preparing to visit the East in person. Some indeed asserted that his object was only to behold the wonders of Egypt[4]; and the interest of the citizens was just then directed towards that mysterious region by the discoveries of an exploring party, which had recently ascended the Nile 900 miles above Syene.[5] Others believed that

[1] Tac. *Ann.* xv. 16—18. The triumphal arch, already decreed during the progress of these events to Nero, was completed and dedicated in the face of this military disaster.

[2] The civil command in Syria was now committed to Cincius or Cestius Gallus (Zumpt, p. 141.), but the combined forces of the Eastern provinces were placed under Corbulo, and he received authority, like that given to Pompeius by the Gabinian law, over all officers, civil and military, throughout the East. Thus we find that he summoned to his standard cohorts from Illyricum and Egypt. Tac. *Ann.* xv. 25, 26.

[3] Tac. *Ann.* xv. 29, 30.: "At nunc versos casus: iturum Tiridatem ostentui gentibus, quanto minus quam captivum!"

[4] Tac. *Ann.* xv. 36.: "Omissa in præsens Achaia, ... provincias Orientis, maxime Ægyptum, secretis imaginationibus agitans."

[5] For a brief notice of this interesting expedition, see Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* vi. 35.; also Seneca, *Nat. Quæst.* vi. 8., who had con-

he had no intention of proceeding beyond Greece; but it seems probable that his views were really more extensive, and that he contemplated throwing himself into the quarters of the Syrian legions, and checking by his presence the ambition of the proconsul, perhaps seizing an opportunity to overthrow him. But, whatever Nero's project may have been, it was frustrated, as we have seen, by the occurrence of the fire at Rome. The affairs of the next three years have been already related: the conspiracies which were concerted against the emperor at home, his redoubled efforts to secure the favour of the populace, and his cruel precaution of destroying every man of eminence who might become the centre of fresh machinations to his prejudice. In the year 819, he at last found leisure to execute his scheme of travel, so far, at least, as to visit Greece, where he presented himself at the public spectacles, and gratified his passion for dancing and singing, before promiscuous assemblages, with still less reserve than at home. All the states which held musical contests had hastened, even before his arrival, to humour him with the offer of their prizes, and Nero had received their envoys with the highest honours, and invited them to his table. When one of them begged him to give a specimen of his singing, and his skill was rapturously applauded, he declared that the Greeks alone had ears, and alone deserved the honour of hearing him.[1]

A. D. 66.
A. U. 819.

Nero remained in Greece to the beginning of the

versed with some of the party. The curiosity of the Romans is reflected in the long episode about the Nile in the tenth book of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, where the previous attempts to reach its source are enumerated:

"Quæ tibi noscendi Nilum, Romane, cupido est,
Et Phariis Persisque fuit, Macetumque tyrannis:
Nullaque non ætas voluit conferre futuris
Notitiam; sed vincit adhuc natura latendi," &c.

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 22.

year 821. He was attended by courtiers and court-followers of all descriptions, and many, it was affirmed, of the chief nobility were invited to accompany him, that he might slay them more securely at a distance from the city. However this may be, the ministers of his luxury and panders to his vices formed the most conspicuous portion of his escort; for he seems to have prosecuted his enormities among the despised Greeks more shamelessly than ever.[1] The great ambition of the Imperator, now following in the track of Mummius, Flamininus, Agrippa, and Augustus, was to gain the distinction of a Periodonicus, or victor in the whole circle of the Games; for in compliment to him, the contests which recurred in successive years at Olympia, Nemea, Delphi, and Corinth were all to be enacted during his residence in the country.[2] Nor was this the only irregularity admitted. At Olympia he demanded a musical contest, such as had never been practised there before; at the Isthmus he contended in tragedy and comedy, which also was contrary to the local usage.[3] The exertions of Nero were not confined to playing, singing, and acting. He presented himself also as a charioteer, nor was he ashamed to receive the prize even when he had fallen with car and horses to the ground. Wherever he went he challenged the most famous artists to contend with him, and extorted every prize from every competitor. A Roman consular enacted

Nero in Greece: his triumphs at the Grecian games.

A.D. 67. A.U. 820.

[1] This absence from Rome may, indeed, have allowed greater licence to exaggeration in our accounts; but generally the Romans indulged their vices more freely abroad. As regards the nuptials of Nero with Sporus under the name of Sabina, it may be worth while to observe that it was in Greece, not in Rome, that they were solemnized. Dion, lxiii. 13. Nevertheless, the story of Nero and Pythagoras in Tacitus (*Ann.* xv. 37.) admits of no such qualification.

[2] Suet. *Ner.* 23.; Dion, lxiii. 10, where see Reimar's note. This Olympiad of confusion was afterwards omitted from the list in consequence. Philostr. *Vit. Apoll.* iv. 24.; Pausan. x. 36.

[3] Lucian, *Ner.* 9.

the part of herald, and proclaimed in the astonished ears of Greece, *Nero the Emperor is Victor, and he crowns the People of Rome, and the World which is his own.*[1]

The flattery of the Greeks deserved substantial acknowledgment, and Nero was prepared to make a sacrifice for the purpose. He negotiated an exchange of provinces with the senate, resigning the imperial prison-house of Sardinia, and receiving in its place the prefecture of Achaia. He then proclaimed, in the forum at Corinth, the freedom and immunity of the province, while he awarded to his judges the honour of Roman citizenship, together with large presents in money.[2] Another project ascribed to him, magnificent and useful in itself, may have had no other object in his mind than to render him famous in history; in almost any other human being we should look for some worthier motive for it. This was the cutting of the Isthmus of Corinth, a measure often before proposed and attempted, but never achieved.[3] The work was commenced: convicts were condemned to labour upon it, and among them the learned Stoic Musonius Rufus, removed from Gyarus, whither he had been banished as an accomplice in Piso's conspiracy, was seen by another philosopher handling the spade and pick-axe. But

Nero proclaims the freedom of of Greece.

His project for cutting through the Isthmus.

[1] Dion, lxiii. 14.: στεφανοῖ τόν τε τῶν Ῥωμαίων δῆμον καὶ τὴν ἰδίαν οἰκουμένην.

[2] Plutarch, *Flamin.* 12., who might have been a witness . . Νέρων καθ' ἡμᾶς ἐν Κορίνθῳ . . . says that he made this announcement from the rostrum in the agora. Suetonius, *Ner.* 24., with the zeal of the historians to blacken Nero's character as a Roman, declares that he spoke from the stadium itself. "Quæ beneficia e medio stadio, Isthmiorum die, sua ipse voce pronuntiavit." Dion, lxiii. 11., does not mention the place.

[3] On these futile attempts see Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* iv. 4. Lucan also alludes to this as one of the common visions of ambition and enterprise. *Phars.* vi. 60.:

"Tot potuere manus adjungere Seston Abydo, ...
Et ratibus longæ flexus donare Maleæ."

men of science from Egypt assured the emperor that, if the work were effected, the waters of the Corinthian gulf, being higher than the Saronic, would submerge the island of Ægina, and after Nero's departure the design was promptly abandoned.[1] The Romans regarded its frustration as a judgment perhaps on his unnatural pride. In commencing the work with a sacrifice, it had been remarked, as an instance of the hatred he bore the senate, that he had prayed simply that it might turn out well *for the Emperor and the People of Rome.*[2]

A political motive may be assigned for this visit to Greece.

It is not impossible, however, that there may have been a politic motive in this visit to Greece, such as I have formerly suggested for the expedition of Caius into Gaul. Fresh disturbances had broken out in Judea: the cruelties of Gessius Florus had excited a sedition, which Cestius Gallus advanced to Jerusalem from Antioch to repress. But here he had encountered the people in arms, and had been suddenly overpowered and slain. The Jews were elated with success and hopeless of pardon; it was soon evident that the great war which must decide the fate of their country, and with it of the Roman empire in the East, so often threatened, so long delayed, had commenced. But Corbulo was almost on the spot; his legions were mighty, his name still mightier; such forces under such a leader might be trusted to do the work of Rome thoroughly in any quarter. Nevertheless the jealousy of the wretched prince prevailed over all concern for the interests of his country.[3] He trembled

Nero jealous of Corbulo.

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 19.; Dion lxiii. 16.; Philostr. *Vit. Apoll.* iv. 24., v. 19. I believe there is no foundation for the idea of the one sea being higher than the other. A similar notion respecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean has prevailed to much later times. The late French Survey (1853) makes, I am told, the mean level of the former one metre higher than the latter.

[2] Suet. *Ner.* 37.: "Dissimulata senatus mentione."

[3] The remark of Tiridates to Nero at Rome, "What a good slave

at the increase of influence this new war might bring to his formidable proconsul. This was the moment he chose for repairing in person to the threshold of his province, and summoning the man he feared to attend upon him in Greece. At the same time he ordered Vespasianus, who had already distinguished himself in the British war, but had acquired as yet no dangerous preeminence, to take command of the forces destined for Palestine. Corbulo must have known that he was superseded; he must have felt his summons as a disgrace; he must have apprehended personal danger. Yet had he known that every step he took westward was bringing him straight to his doom, such was his fidelity as a soldier that he would have obeyed without hesitation. No sooner had he arrived at Cenchreæ, the port of Corinth, than he was met by emissaries from Nero bearing him the order to despatch himself. Without murmur or remonstrance, he plunged a sword into his heart, exclaiming as he struck the blow, *Rightly served!*[1]

Summons him to Greece, and puts him to death.

Nor was the gallant Corbulo the tyrant's only victim. At the same time he summoned two brothers, Rufus and Proculus, of the great Scribonian house, who commanded in the two Germanics, to meet him in Greece, under pretence of conferring with them on state affairs. The summons was in fact a recal, and the pretence which accompanied it could hardly have deceived them; yet they too obeyed with the same alacrity as

Assassination of two other proconsuls.

you have in Corbulo," Dion, lxiii. 6., was meant. I suppose, to excite his apprehensions of a man who with such power condescended to servitude.

[1] Dion, lxiii. 17.: παίων ἔλεγεν, ἄξιος. We have now lost the guidance of Tacitus, and are less certain of our dates. Dion places this event in 820. The appointment of Vespasian was certainly towards the end of 819 (Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iii. 4. 2.), and Zumpt thinks that Corbulo had fallen before this appointment was made. On the whole, I do see no reason to reject the date in Dion.

Corbulo, and fell, perhaps not unwittingly, into the same snare. Some specific charges were laid against them; but no opportunity was given them of meeting them, nor were they allowed to see the emperor. They killed themselves in despair.[1]

Nero shrinks from presenting himself at Athens, and from initiation into the mysteries at Eleusis.

Although during his sojourn in Greece, Nero traversed the province in every direction, it was observed that he abstained from visiting either Athens or Sparta. With respect to the city of Lycurgus it was affirmed merely that he kept aloof from it lest the austerity of its usages should prove irksome to him; but he dared not enter the abode of the Erinnyes, from dread of their vengeance on his crimes.[2] Another account said that he refrained from initiation into the mysteries of Eleusis, which was denied, under direst imprecations, to the impious and impure.[3] Of these awful legends of Grecian antiquity but a faint and confused echo resounded in Italy. To the Latin or the Sabine it little mattered whether the murderer shrank from Athens or Eleusis, whether it was the avenging Furies or the pure goddess of the mysteries before whom he trembled to appear. *Give but freedom to the people,* they said, *to declare what they really think, and who so base as to hesitate between the lots of Seneca and Nero; Nero who more than once deserved the sack, the serpent, and the ape, the instruments of death for parricide. True, Orestes by divine command had slain his mother; but he at least avenged the death of a father—Nero had assisted at the slaughter of Claudius: Orestes spared at least his wife and sister—Nero had murdered both: Orestes*

The indignation of the Romans against him expressed by Juvenal.

[1] Dion, *l. c.* [2] Dion, lxiii. 14.

[3] Suet. *Ner.* 34. There seems to be a confusion between the two accounts, and that of Suetonius appears the more worthy of belief. The Furies were already present to the murderer of Agrippina: "Sæpe confessus exagitari se materna specie, verberibusque Furiarum ac tædis ardentibus."

had not poisoned a kinsman—Nero had mingled aconite for many: above all, Orestes had never sung upon the stage, nor chanted, like Nero, the fall of Ilion. This it seems was the crown and climax of his crimes, the last and worst of the indignities he heaped on Rome; this was the deed for which the sword of the avenger was most fitly drawn.[1] *For such*, exclaims Juvenal, *forsooth, were the acts, such were the arts of our highborn prince, proud to degrade himself on a foreign stage, and earn the paltry chaplets of the Grecian games. Let him lay before the image of Domitius the mantle of Thyestes, the mask of Antigone or Melanippe; let him hang his votive lyre on the marble statue of Augustus.*[2]

Why they regarded his acting and singing as the climax of his enormities.

Beneath this veil of rhetoric lies a truth which it is the province of history to remark. The Romans, from age to age, viewed their own times in a very different light from that in which they have appeared to posterity. The notion of Juvenal that the acting and singing of Nero were in fact his most flagrant enormities was felt no doubt, even in his own day, as a wild exaggeration; nevertheless it points to the principle,

[1] Juvenal, viii. 211. foll.:

> "Libera si dentur populo suffragia, &c. . . . .
> Troica non scripsit."

He composed his tragedy, Τροίας ἅλωσις, before; he took occasion to sing it at the burning of Rome.

[2] Juvenal, *l. c.* 224.:

> "Hæc opera atque hæ sunt generosi Principis artes,
> Gaudentis fœdo peregrina ad pulpita socco
> Prostitui, Graiæque apium meruisse coronæ.
> Majorum effigies habeant insignia vocis. . . . .
> Et de marmoreo citharam suspende colosso."

Some critics have been tempted to interpret the last li of the Colossus of Nero himself, which stood in the entrance of his golden house, said to have been 110 or 120 feet in height. Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* xxxiv. 18.) gives us to understand that this statue was of marble, while such colossal figures were generally cast in bronze. "Ea statua indicavit interisse æris fundendi scientiam." But it seems safer to refer it to the statement of Suetonius (*Ner.* 12.): "citharam a judicibus ad se delatam adoravit, ferrique ad Augusti statuam jussit."

then still in vigour, of the practical religion of antiquity, the principle of faith in its social traditions. With cruelty and oppression the Romans were so familiar that Nero's atrocities in this respect, so harrowing to our feelings, made little impression upon them; but his desecration of their national manners, his abandonment of the *mos majorum*, the usage of his ancestors, startled them like impiety or sacrilege. They were not aware how far they had really drifted from the habits of antiquity, how much of foreign poison they had admitted into their veins. Theoretically they still held in sanctimonious horror the customs of the stranger; foreign usages might be innocent, nay, laudable, in their own place, but to introduce them into Rome was a monstrous sin, a sin, not against the gods in whom they no longer believed, but against the Nation, in which they believed more intensely perhaps than ever. The State or Nation was itself gradually assuming in their eyes the personality of a distinct divinity, in which all other divinities were absorbed: the Hellenism which Nero vaunted was apostasy from the goddess Roma.

Nero plunders Greece of her monuments of art.

The Greeks on the other hand would regard, we may suppose, with more indulgence the caprices of their imperial visitor; they were accustomed to flatter, and in this instance there was some excuse for flattering a humour so flattering to themselves. The miserable vices he paraded before them were too like their own, at least in their period of corruption, to elicit strong moral reprobation. Nevertheless, if we may credit our accounts, he found more effectual means of disgusting them. The imperial tyranny was always pursued, as by its shadow, by profuse and fatal expenditure. It seemed unable to move without the attendance of a crowd of harpies, ever demanding their prey with maw insatiable. Every day required fresh plunder; every day proscriptions and confiscations revealed

the prince's necessities, and if these for a moment slackened for want of victims, his hands were laid on the monuments of art, on every object on which money could be raised throughout the devoted land. The temples as well as the dwellings and the forums of Greece were ransacked again for the costliest and most cherished treasures, to be sold by auction to the highest bidder, or redeemed at exorbitant prices by their unhappy owners. Greece was powerless to resist, and her murmurs were drowned in the acclamations of the hired applauders; but she felt her wrongs deeply, and the pretended boon of freedom, accompanied by a precarious immunity, was regarded perhaps as an insult rather than a favour.[1]

Helius governs Rome during Nero's absence.

Rome at least, it might be hoped, would breathe again during the absence of her hateful tormentor. But this, we are assured, was as far from her as ever. Her condition had become even more miserable. The emperor had given the government of Italy to a freedman named Helius, and this minion exercised cruelty and rapine at his own caprice, not even deigning to ask the prince's pleasure beforehand on the executions and confiscations he commanded.[2] Yet Helius was not unfaithful to his master's interests. On the first symptoms of danger from discontent in the city or the provinces, for such symptoms began at last to threaten, he urged him to hasten back to the seat of government, and it was Nero's obstinacy alone that postponed his return for some months. *You admonish me, you entreat me*, replied the infatuated wretch, *to present myself again at Rome; nay, but you should rather dissuade me from returning, until I have reaped my full harvest of laurels.* This harvest was not yet

[1] Dion, lxiii. 11.; Suet. *Ner.* 32. Nero, it will be remembered, had begun a systematic robbery of Greece, and extended it to Asia, before this time. See Tac. *Ann.* xvi. 23., and vol. vi., ch. liii.

[2] Suet. *Ner.* 23.; Dion, lxiii. 12.

gathered in, and the cries of the keeper of the city, already trembling for the fate of the empire, were disregarded, while there yet remained a stadium to be trodden, or a chaplet to be won in Greece. At the commencement, however, of the year 821 the aspect of affairs had become still more serious.[1] Plots for the subversion of the government were believed to be rife in the armies of the West. The heads of administration at Rome knew not whom of their officers in Gaul or Spain to trust. Deep gloom had settled down on the upper classes in the capital; the temper of the populace itself, so long the stay of Nero's tyranny, was uncertain. Helius again urged him to hasten his return. He crossed over to Greece to confer with him in person. He repeated his instances with increasing fervour. At last, when there seemed no more of fame or booty to be wrung from Greece, Nero deigned to take ship, though the season of navigation had not yet commenced, and urged his prow through stormy seas to the haven of Puteoli.[2]

A. D. 68.
A. U. 821.

Nero's return to Italy, and triumphal entry into Rome.

At Delphi he had consulted the oracle about his future fortunes, and had been warned, we are told, against *the seventy-third year*, a response which seemed to the youth of thirty to portend a great length of days, but was found in the sequel to have another and a fatal signification.[3] Fortified, however, by this delusion, he had returned to Italy with little anxiety, and when some of the precious objects that followed in his train

[1] We must place at this period the futile conspiracy of Vinicius at Beneventum, which is cursorily mentioned by Suetonius (*Ner.* 36.), but by no other author.

[2] Dion, lxiii. 19.

[3] Suet. *Ner.* 40. The seventy-third year referred, it seems, to the age of his successor Galba. The story we may suppose was invented to fit the event The oracle at Delphi had fallen into disrepute, but was still consulted by the vain and frivolous. It is not improbable that Nero insisted on receiving a response. Comp. the story of Appius in Lucan, v. 122. foll., recounted in chapter xvii.

were lost by shipwreck, he vaunted in the plenitude of his self-assurance that the fishes themselves would restore them. After losing and again recovering both Britain and Armenia, his confidence in his good fortune had become, it is said, unbounded. It was at Naples, he remembered, that he had commenced his long course of artistic victories. Now arrived at the height of his glory, he determined to celebrate his successes by a triumphal entry into the Campanian capital, with a team of milk-white horses. The walls were broken down to admit the chariot of the Hieronicus, and the same extravagance was repeated when he entered Antium, his native place, and the Albanum, his favourite residence, and once more, when he presented himself before Rome.[1] He drove in pomp through the city, in the chariot in which Augustus had triumphed, with the flutist Diodorus by his side, arrayed in a purple robe and a mantle blazing with golden stars, wearing on his head the Olympian coronal, and waving the Pythian in his hand. He was preceded by a long train of attendants bearing aloft his other chaplets and the titles of all his victories; he was followed by his five thousand Augustani, with loud and measured acclamations, as the soldiers who shared his glory. The procession passed through the Circus, some arches of which were demolished to admit it, and thence to the Velabrum and the forum, skirting the base of the Palatine to the Porta Mugionis, the chief ascent to the hill and the temple of Apollo on its summit. The sacrifice of victims, the flinging of odours, and every other accompaniment of a military triumph, were duly observed in this mock solemnity; the statues of

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 25. Brotier cites the statement of Vitruvius, ix. præf.: "Nobilibus athletis qui Olympia, Pythia, Isthmia, Nemea vicissent, Græcorum majores ita magnos honores constituerunt, uti. . . . cum revertuntur in suas civitates cum victoria, triumphantes quadrigis in mœnia et in patrias invehantur."

the emperor were decked with crowns and lyres; the citizens hailed their hero with the titles of Nero-Apollo and Nero-Hercules, invoking his *divine voice*, and pronouncing all who heard it blessed. The affair was concluded by the striking of medals, on which Nero was represented, to the shame and horror of all genuine patriots, in the garb of a flute-player.[1]

Discontent in the provinces.

But the hour of retribution was at hand. Notwithstanding the servile flattery of the senate, and the triumphs and supplications it had decreed, Nero felt uneasy at the murmurs no longer stifled, and the undissembled gloom which now surrounded him in his capital, and withdrew himself from Rome to the freer air of Campania. Meanwhile the discontent repressed in the city was finding vent in the provinces, and the camps, thronged as they were with kinsmen of the mocked and injured senators, were brooding over projects of revenge. Among the most distinguished of the officers who at this time held commands and enjoyed the confidence of their soldiers, was Servius Sulpicius Galba, who for several years had governed the Hither Spain. Connected with the first families of Rome and descended from many heroes of the camp and forum, this man stood high in public regard, and in the admiration of the emperors themselves, for his courage, his skill, and his austerity. He had deserved well of Caius for the vigour with which, at a critical moment, he drew up the reins of discipline in the Rhenish camps; still better of Claudius for refusing the offer of his own soldiers to raise him to empire on Caius's death. He had held command in Aquitania, and was for two years proconsul of Africa; he had received the triumphal ornaments, and been admitted to the priestly colleges of the Titii, the Quindecemvirs, and the

Character and position of Servius Sulpicius Galba, commander in Spain.

[1] Dion, lxiii. 20.; Suet. *Ner.* 25.

Augustales. Full of years and honours, he had retired from public employment through the first half of Nero's principate, till summoned to preside over the Tarraconensis. He exercised his powers with vigilance and a harshness which perhaps was salutary, until the emperor's growing jealousy warned him to shroud his reputation under the veil of indolence or even neglect, and thus he escaped the fate of Corbulo and lived to avenge it.[1] *Galba was in his seventy-third year.* In his childhood he had been brought, it was reported, with others of the young nobility, to salute the aged Augustus; and the emperor, taking him playfully by the cheek, had said, *And thou too, child, shalt one day taste our empire.*[2] Tiberius, it was added, had learned from the diviners the splendid destiny that awaited his old age, but had remarked complacently, that to himself it could not matter.[2] Nero, it seems, whom these prognostications touched more nearly, either forgot, or was lulled to false security about them.[3]

Early in the winter of 821, while Nero was still absent in Greece, Galba received overtures from C. Julius Vindex, prefect of the Farther Gaul, for a simultaneous rising. Vindex was himself a Gallo-Roman scion of a royal house in Aquitania, adopted into the imperial gens; but while he imbibed the pride of a Roman, he retained the impetuous spirit of his ancestors; and the enormities of Nero, aggravated no doubt in his esteem by his exactions in Gaul itself, roused his determination to overthrow him without a view to personal aggrandisement. The time indeed was yet far dis-

Overtures for a revolt made to him by Vindex in Gaul.

[1] Suet. *Galb.* 9. His government in Spain extended over eight years, from 814 to 821. Comp. Plutarch, *Galb.* 4.

[2] Suet. *Galb.* 4.: καὶ σὺ, τέκνον, τῆς ἀρχῆς ἡμῶν παρατρώξῃ . . . "vivat sane quando id ad nos nihil pertinet." The same presages and others are mentioned also by Tacitus, *Ann.* vi. 20.; Dion, lvii. 19.; Joseph. *Antiq.* xviii. 6. 19.

[3] Dion, lxiii. 22, 23.; Suet. *Galb.* 6, 7.

tant when a foreigner could even conceive the idea of gaining the purple. But he fixed his eyes on Galba, as the ablest of the class from which fortune could make an emperor, and it was with vexation that he found the old chief too cautious to be driven headlong into a revolt, the event of which might seem so doubtful.[1]

Virginius conspires with Vindex.

Galba indeed had good reason to hesitate. Nero set a price on the head of Vindex, whose designs were speedily revealed to him, and though the forces of the Gaulish province were disposed to follow their chief, the more powerful legions of the Lower Germany, under Virginius Rufus, were in full march against them. The armies met at Vesontio, and there Vindex and Virginius at a private interview agreed to conspire together, but their troops could come to no such understanding; the Virginians attacked the soldiers of Vindex, and almost cut them to pieces. Vindex thereupon, with the haste and levity of his race, threw himself on his sword, and the rebellion seemed for a moment to be crushed. But Galba had become alarmed for his own safety. He had received communications from a rebel, all whose acts were well known to the government. He had been urged to proclaim himself emperor, and no refusal on his part could efface the crime of having been judged worthy of such a distinction. Indeed, so at least he pretended, he had already intercepted orders from Nero to take his life, and a plot for his assassination was opportunely detected among a company of slaves presented him by a freedman of the emperor.[2] Thus impelled to provide for his own safety, he called his troops together, and setting before them the images of the tyrant's noblest victims, harangued them on

Disagreement between their armies, and battle of Vesontio.

Vindex slays himself.

Galba is saluted Imperator by his soldiers.

[1] Dion, lxiii. 22, 23.; Suet. *Galb.* 6, 7. [2] Suet. *Galb.* 9, 10.

the state of public affairs. The soldiers saluted him as Imperator, but he would only allow himself to be styled Legatus of the Senate and the People. He proceeded, however, at once to prorogue all civil business, and provide for immediate war by raising forces both legionary and auxiliary, from the youth of the province. At the same time he convened the notables of the country to give perhaps a civil colour to his military enterprise.[1] The Gaulish and Germanic legions, now reunited, after the death of Vindex, had offered to raise Virginius to the purple; they conjured him to assume the title of Imperator, and inscribed on his busts the names of Cæsar and Augustus.[2] But he steadily refused the honours thrust upon him, erased the obnoxious letters, and at length persuaded his admirers to leave the decision of affairs to the authorities at home. He entered, however, into communication with Galba, who had now, it seems, determined on the attempt, and the news was bruited far and wide that Gaul and Spain had revolted, and that, whoever might eventually obtain the empire, it had passed irrevocably from the monster Nero.[3]

Virginius, proclaimed by his own soldiers, declines the title.

At once it appeared how many pretenders to power might exist in the bosom of the provincial camps. The fatal secret of the empire, *that a prince might be created elsewhere than at Rome*, so long undiscovered, so alien, as was supposed from the sentiments of the age, was revealed in more than one quarter.[1]

Other candidates for the empire. Claudius Macer in Africa. Fonteius Capito in Germania.

[1] Suet. *Ner. l. c.*

[2] Dion, lxiii. 25.; Tacitus, *Hist.* i. 8., speaks more hesitatingly: "Nec statim pro Galba Virginius: an imperare voluisset dubium · delatum ei a milite imperium conveniebat."

[3] Clinton computes that Galba allowed himself to be proclaimed emperor on the 3rd April. *Fast. Rom.* i. 50.

[4] I adopt here the well-known observation of Tacitus at the opening of his Histories: "evulgato imperii arcano, posse principem alibi quam Romæ fieri." *Hist.* i. 4.

Not in Gaul and Spain only, but in Africa, and the Lower Germany, the legions were ready to make an emperor of their own chief. Claudius Macer in the one, Fonteius Capito in the other, were proclaimed by the soldiers. At the same time Salvius Otho, Nero's ancient favourite, who was weary of his long oblivion on the shores of the Atlantic, declared himself a supporter of Galba, and lent him his own slaves and plate to swell his retinue and increase his resources. The Civil Wars had recommenced.

Nero receives news of the revolt of Vindex.

Such was the march of disaffection, the first anticipations of which had been revealed to Helius before the end of 820, and had induced him to urge the emperor, first by letter and afterwards in person, to hasten home. Nero, as we have seen, could not be persuaded to regard them seriously, or postpone to their consideration his paltry gratifications and amusements. After his return to Rome he had again quitted it for Naples in March, 821, and it was on the 19th of that month, the anniversary of Agrippina's murder, while presiding at a gymnic exhibition, that he received the news of the revolt of Vindex. Still he treated the announcement with contempt, and even expressed satisfaction at the prospect of new confiscations. He witnessed the contests with unabated interest, and retired from them to a banquet. Interrupted by fresh and more alarming despatches, he resented them with petulant ill-humour; for eight days he would neither issue orders nor be spoken to on the subject. Finally arrived a manifesto from Vindex himself, which moved him to send a message to the senate, requiring it to denounce the rebel as a public enemy; but he excused himself from appearing in person, alleging a cold or sore throat which he must nurse for the conservation of his voice. Nothing so much incensed him as Vindex calling him Ahenobarbus instead of Nero, and dis-

His levity succeeded by ill-humour, and again by presumptuous confidence.

paraging his skill in singing. *Had they ever heard a better performer?* he asked peevishly of all around him. He now hurried trembling to Rome; but he was reassured, we are told, on the way by noticing a sculpture which represented a Gaulish soldier dragged headlong by a Roman knight.[1] Accordingly, with his usual levity, instead of consulting in full senate, or haranguing on the state of affairs in the forum, he held a hasty conversation with a few only of his nobles, and passed the day in explaining to them a new water-organ, on which he proposed, he said, *with Vindex's good leave*, to perform in public. He completed and dedicated a temple to Poppæa: once more he celebrated the games of the circus, once more he played and sang and drove the chariot. But it was for the last time. Vindex had fallen, but Galba, it was now announced, had raised the standard of revolt. The rebel's property in Rome was immediately confiscated, to which he replied by selling *under the spear* the emperor's estates in Spain. The hour of retribution, long delayed, was now swiftly advancing; courier after courier was dashing through the gates, bringing news of the defection of generals and legions. The revolt of Virginius was no longer doubtful. At this intelligence the puny tyrant fainted: coming to himself he tore his robes and smote his head with pusillanimous wailings. To the consolations of his nurse he replied, with the cries of an infant, *Never was such ill fortune as his: other Cæsars had fallen by the sword, he alone must lose the empire still living.*[2] At last he recollected himself sufficiently to summon troops from Illyricum for the defence of Italy; but these, it was found, were in correspondence with the enemy.[3] Another resource, which served

Announcement of the defection of Virginius and Galba.

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 41. [2] Suet. *Ner.* 42.

[3] Tac. *Hist.* i. 9. This, I presume, was the force placed under Rubrius Gallus; Dion, lxiii. 27.

only to show to what straits he was driven, was to land sailors from the fleet at Ostia, and form them into a legion.[1] Then he invoked the pampered populace to arise in his behalf, and dressed up courtezans and dancers as Amazons to attend his march: next moment he exclaimed that he would take ship for Alexandria and there earn subsistence by singing in the streets.[2] Again he launched into invectives against the magistrates abroad, threatening to recal and disgrace them throughout his dominions: the provinces he would give up to pillage, he would slay every Gaul in the city, he would massacre the senate, he would let loose the lions on the populace, he would lay Rome in ashes. Finally, the tyrant's vein exhausted, he proposed in woman's mood to meet the rebels unarmed, trusting in his beauty, his tears, and the persuasive tones of his voice to win them to obedience.[3]

Last hours and death of Nero.

Meanwhile the excitement among the knights and senators at the prospect of deliverance kept pace with the progress of revolt abroad. Portents were occurring at their doors. Blood rained on the Alban mount; the gates of the Julian sepulchre burst open of their own accord. The Hundred Days of Nero were drawing rapidly to a close. He had landed in Italy about the end of February, and now at the beginning of June his cause had already become hopeless. Galba, though

[1] Plut. *Galb.* 15. [2] Dion, lxiii. 27.; Plut. *Galb.* 2.

[3] Suet. *Ner.* 43. This writer affirms that Nero deposed both the consuls, and assumed the fasces himself without a colleague, from a persuasion that the Gauls could not be subdued except by a consul. The story is not supported by other authorities, and seems in itself improbable. Neither Cæsar nor Camillus were consuls when they conquered the Gauls. Yet such a notion might have been instilled into the public mind by the victorious consulships of Marius. Or was sole consul the nearest approach an emperor could make to the office of dictator? At all events we shall find the consuls in their chairs immediately on the death of Nero.

steadfast in his resolution, had not yet set his troops in motion: nevertheless Nero was no longer safe in the city. The people, at first indifferent, were now clamouring against him; for there was a dearth of provisions, and a vessel, just arrived from Alexandria, was found, to their disgust, to bear not grain, but fine sand for the wrestlers in the amphitheatre.[1] The prætorians had been seduced by their prefect Nymphidius, to whom the camp was abandoned by the flight of Tigellinus. Nero was left without advisers; the senators stood aloof; of Helius, lately so powerful and energetic, we hear nothing. Terrified by dreams, stung by ridicule or desertion, when his last hope of succour was announced to have deceived him, the wretched tyrant started from his couch at supper, upset the tables, and dashed his choicest vessels to the ground; then taking poison from Locusta and placing it in a golden casket, he crossed from the palace to the Servilian gardens, and sent his trustiest freedman to secure a galley at Ostia.[2] He conjured some tribunes and centurions, with a handful of guards, to join his flight, but all refused, and one blunter than the rest exclaimed tauntingly, *Is it then so hard to die?*[3] At last at midnight, finding that even the sentinels had left their posts, he sent or rushed himself to assemble his attendants. Every door was closed; he knocked, but no answer came. Returning to his chamber, he found the slaves fled, the furniture pillaged, the case of poison removed. Not a guard, not a gladiator, was at hand, to pierce his throat. *I have neither friend nor foe*, he ex-

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 45. Comp. Plin. *Hist. Nat.* xxxv. 47.: "E Nilo arena."

[2] Suet. *Ner.* 47. The Romans imagined Locusta a constant attendant at Nero's table. So in the rough but energetic phrase of Turnus (Fragm. apud Wernsdorf, *Poet. Min.* iii.) she is described as "Circe inter vernas nota Neronis."

[3] Suet. *Ner.* 47. A quotation from Virgil: "Usque adeone mori miserum est?"

claimed. He would have thrown himself into the Tiber, but his courage failed him. He must have time, he said, and repose to collect his spirits for suicide, and his freedman Phaon at last offered him his villa in the suburbs, four miles from the city. In undress and barefooted, throwing a rough cloak over his shoulders, and a kerchief across his face, he glided through the doors, mounted a horse, and, attended by Sporus and three others, passed the city gates with the dawn of the summer morning.[1] The Nomentane road led him beneath the wall of the prætorians, whom he might hear uttering curses against him, and pledging vows to Galba; and the early travellers from the country asked him as they met, *What news of Nero?* or remarked to one another, *These men are pursuing the tyrant.* Thunder and lightning, and a shock of earthquake, added horror to the moment. Nero's horse started at a dead body on the road-side, the kerchief fell from his face, and a prætorian passing by recognised and saluted him.[2] At the fourth milestone the party quitted the highway, alighted from their horses, and scrambled on foot through a cane-brake, laying their own cloaks to tread on, to the rear of the promised villa.[3] Phaon now desired Nero to crouch in a sand-pit hard by, while he contrived to open the drain from the bathroom, and so admit him unperceived; but he vowed he would not go *alive*, as he said, *underground*, and

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 48. Comp. Dion, lxiii. 27.; Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iv. 9. 2.; Eutrop. vii. 9.; Aur. Vict. *Epit.* 5.

[2] "Cadaver," possibly, the carcass of an animal; but the word is more commonly used for a human body. The odious familiarity of the Romans with such horrors may be illustrated from the story told of Vespasian (Suet. *Vesp.* 5.). "Prandente eo quondam canis extrarius *e trivio* manum humanam intulit, mensæque subjecit." The prætorian met the party on his way towards the city; he was not privy to the change of feeling among his comrades.

[3] The villa lay between the Salarian and Nomentane roads (Suet. *l. c.*), which branched off from the city at the Colline gate. Strab. v. 3. 1.

remained trembling beneath the wall. Taking water in his hand from a puddle, *This*, he said, *is the famous drink of Nero.*[1] At last a hole was made, through which he crept on all fours into a narrow chamber of the house, and there threw himself on a pallet.[2] The coarse bread that was offered him he could not eat, but swallowed a little tepid water. Still he lingered, his companions urging him to seek refuge, without delay, from the insults about to be heaped on him. He ordered them to dig a grave, and himself lay down to give the measure; he desired them to collect bits of marble to decorate his sepulchre, and prepare water to cleanse and wood to burn his corpse, sighing meanwhile, and muttering, *What an artist to perish!*[3] Presently a slave of Phaon's brought papers from Rome, which Nero snatched from him, and read that the senate had proclaimed him an enemy, and decreed his death, *in the ancient fashion.* He asked what that was? and was informed that the culprit was stripped, his head placed in a fork, and his body smitten with the stick till death. Terrified at this announcement, he took two daggers from his bosom, tried their edge one after the other, and again laid them down, alleging that *the moment was not yet arrived.* Then he called on Sporus to commence his funereal lamentations; then he implored some of the party to set him the example; once and again he reproached himself with his own timidity. *Fie! Nero, fie!* he muttered in Greek, *Courage, man! come, rouse thee!* Suddenly was heard the trampling of horsemen, sent to seize the culprit alive. Then at last, with a verse of

[1] "Hæc est Neronis decocta:" Suet., Dion. In allusion, it may be presumed, to a beverage of water boiled, sweetened, and flavoured, which Nero had himself invented.

[2] Suet. *l. c.*: "Quadrupes per angustias effossæ cavernæ receptus in proximam cellam." The Roman houses were not furnished with sewers, but every bath had its drain.

[3] Suet. *l. c.*: "Qualis artifex pereo;" Dion, c. 29.

Homer hastily ejaculated, *Sound of swift-footed steeds strikes on my ears*, he placed a weapon to his breast, and the slave Epaphroditus drove it home.[1] The blow was scarcely struck, when the centurion rushed in, and, thrusting his cloak against the wound, pretended he was come to help him. The dying wretch could only murmur, *Too late*, and, *Is this your fidelity?* and expired with a horrid stare on his countenance. He had adjured his attendants to burn his body, and not let the foe bear off his head; and this was now allowed him: the corpse was consumed with haste and imperfectly, but at least without mutilation.[2]

Extinction of the Cæsarean family with Nero.

Nero perished on the 9th of June, 821, at the age of thirty years and six months, in the fourteenth year of his principate.[3] The child borne him by Poppæa had died in infancy, and a subsequent marriage with Statilia Messalina had proved unfruitful.[4] The stock of the Julii, refreshed in vain by grafts from the Octavii, the Claudii, and the Domitii, had been reduced to his single person, and with Nero the adoptive race of the great dictator was extinguished. The first of the Cæsars had married four times, the second thrice, the third twice, the fourth thrice again, the fifth six times, and lastly, the sixth thrice also. Of these

[1] Hom. *Il.* x. 535.: Ἵππων μ' ὠκυπόδων ἀμφὶ κτύπος οὔατα βάλλει.

[2] Suet. *Ner.* 49.

[3] The day was said to be the anniversary of the death of Octavia. Clinton, *Fast. Rom.* i. 52., calculates Nero's life at thirty years five months and twenty-six days, counting from December 15, 790, to June 9, 821; his reign at thirteen years seven months and twenty-eight days.

[4] The death of Poppæa had been quickly followed by Nero's marriage with Statilia Messalina, grand-daughter of Statilius Taurus, with whom he had previously intrigued, having procured the death of her husband, Atticus Vestinus, during his consulship, to obtain her. Suet. *Ner.* 35.; Tac. *Ann.* xv. 68, 69. The consulship and execution of Vestinus are placed in the year 818, while Poppæa was still alive. We hear no more of Statilia, except that she survived the emperor.

repeated unions, a large number had borne offspring, yet no descendants of them survived. A few had lived to old age, many reached maturity, some were cut off by early sickness, the end of others was premature and mysterious; but of the whole number a large proportion, which it would be tedious to calculate, were victims of domestic jealousy and politic assassination. Such was the price paid by the usurper's family for their splendid inheritance; but the people accepted it in exchange for internal troubles and promiscuous bloodshed; and though they too had their sacrifices to make, though many noble trees were stripped of their branches under the Cæsars as starkly as the Cæsars themselves, yet order and prosperity had reigned generally throughout the empire; the world had enjoyed a breathing time of a hundred years, to prepare it for the outbreak of civil commotion, for the fiercer frenzy of international warfare, which are next to be related. With Nero we bid farewell to the Cæsars; at the same time we bid farewell to the state of things which the Cæsars created and maintained. We turn over a page in Roman history. On the verge of a new epoch we would treat with grave respect even the monster with whom the old epoch closes: we may think it well that the corpse even of Nero was unmutilated; that he was buried decently in the Domitian gardens on the Pincian; that though the people evinced a thoughtless triumph at his death, as if it promised them a freedom which they could neither use nor understand, some unknown hands were found to strew flowers on his sepulchre, and the rival king of Parthia adjured the senate to do honour to his memory.[1]

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 50. 57.: "Missis ad senatum literis . . . . magno opere oravit, ut Neronis memoria coleretur." It is interesting to learn that the tyrant's obsequies were performed by two nurses of his infancy, and by Acte, the partner of his first excesses ten years before.

Expectation of his return among both Romans and Christians.

Undoubtedly the Romans regarded with peculiar feeling the death of the last of the Cæsars.[1] Nero was cut off in early youth; he perished in obscurity; he was entombed in a private sepulchre with no manifestation of national concern, such as had thrown a gleam of interest over the least regretted of his predecessors. Yet these circumstances would not have sufficed to impart a deep mystery to the event, without the predisposition of the people to imagine that the dynasty which had ruled them for five generations could not suddenly pass away, finally and irrevocably. The idea that Nero still survived, and the expectation of his return to power, continued long to linger among them. More than one pretender arose to claim his empire, and twenty years later a false Nero was protected by the Parthians, among whom he had taken refuge, and only surrendered to the repeated and vehement demands of the Roman government.[2] This popular anticipation was the foundation, perhaps, of the common persuasion of the Christians, when the death of the prince was no longer questioned, that he should revisit the earth in the character of Antichrist; and both Romans and Christians seem to have combined in believing that the East, and possibly that Jerusalem itself, would be the scene of his reappearance.[3]

[1] Suet. *Galb.* 1.: "Progenies Cæsarum in Nerone defecit." Eutrop. vii. 9.; Oros. vii. 7.; Dion, lxii. 18., who cites a Sibylline verse:

ἔσχατος Αἰνεαδῶν μητροκτόνος ἡγεμονεύσει.

It will be remembered that Nero was descended through Agrippina from Julia, the daughter of Augustus (Octavius) and Scribonia. His connexion with the Julii was only adoptive.

[2] Suet. *Ner.* 56.; Tac. *Hist.* ii. 8.: "Achaia et Asia falso exterritæ, velut Nero adventaret."

[3] Comp. Suetonius, *Ner.* 40.: "Prædictum a mathematicis Neroni olim erat, fore ut destitueretur. . . . Spoponderant tamen quidam destituto Orientis dominationem, nonnulli nominatim regnum Hierosolymorum." There will be different opinions whether this idea sprang originally from the Christians or the Romans; probably it was the result of a common feeling reacting from one to the other.

CHAPTER LVI.

The senate accepts Galba as emperor.—His vigour and severity.—State of the provinces and the legions.—Galba adopts Pisó as his colleague, and submits his choice first to the soldiers and afterwards to the senate.—Punishment of Nero's favourites.—Othò intrigues for the empire, and is carried by the soldiers into the prætorian camp and proclaimed emperor.—Galba goes forth to meet the mutineers, and is assassinated, together with Piso.—His character as an emperor.—Otho succeeds, and is threatened with the rivalry of Vitellius.—Revolt of the legions of Gaul.—Vitellius, proclaimed emperor, advances towards Italy.—Uneasy position of Otho.—He puts himself at the head of his troops, and marches to Placentia.—Campaign in the Cisalpine.—Battle of Bedriacum.—Defeat of the Othonians.—Otho kills himself.—Virginius refuses the empire.—The senate accepts Vitellius.—His gluttony, selfishness, and barbarity.—Italy plundered by his soldiers.—He is with difficulty dissuaded from entering Rome in arms as a conqueror. (A.D. 68, 69. A.U. 821, 822.)

The senate decrees Nero a public enemy.

As soon as they were informed of Nero's departure from the palace, and even before he had quitted Rome, the consuls convened the senate at midnight. Such a summons, though not unprecedented, betokened a public crisis, and when the fathers hurried to the place of meeting, they were greeted with the announcement that the tyrant despaired of his throne and personal safety, and were invited to declare him a public enemy, and pronounce on him sentence of death. They were assured of the utter collapse of the means by which he might once have hoped to make head against the enemy: the prætorians had declared openly against him; some battalions he had sent to meet his assailant had already betrayed his cause; the troops in or near the city, which had been previously drafted

from the camps in Britain, Germany, and Illyricum for service in the East, were hostile or indifferent; finally, the sailors from the fleet at Ostia were ready to sell themselves to any power which could bid higher for them than the bankrupt emperor. No doubt with money in hand Nero could have protracted the contest; but his means had been exhausted by his frivolous expenses, and the senators knew that it was only by plundering them that he could suddenly replenish his coffers. If they still hesitated, the news that the wretched tyrant had fled the city before break of day sufficed to reassure them. They now felt that they could wreak all their vengeance safely; they responded with acclamations to the invitation of their chiefs, and in launching sentence of death against the culprit, charged their ministers to take him alive if possible, that they might enjoy the sight of his expiring agonies.

The consuls, Galerius, Trachalus and Silius Italicus.

This savage satisfaction was, as we have seen, denied them; nevertheless justice was done on the tyrant, and the state was saved. So the senate solemnly declared, and the people, with the cap of liberty on their heads, rushed in crowds to the temples to do homage to the gods who had struck down tyranny, and restored freedom to Rome.[1] This demonstration of the populace was indeed worthless; but some attempt might at least have been expected on the part of the senate, to realize and secure this boasted liberty. The brave Virginius had asserted its right to chose an emperor; such was the furthest extent to which a true patriot could go in the cause of the republic, and such, it was fully understood, was the extent of Galba's meaning, when he proclaimed himself the legatus of

[1] Suet. *Ner.* 57.; Dion, lxiii. 29.; Tac. *Hist.* i. 4.: "Patres læti, usurpata statim libertate, licentius, ut erga principem novum et absentem." Yet, whatever licence the senate assumed, Tacitus does not intimate that it forgot for a moment that it still had a master.

the Senate and People. In this solution of the crisis all civil society, at least at Rome, was prepared to acquiesce. The consuls and the tribunes, the patricians and the commons, were equally satisfied with the promise held out to them from beyond the seas, that the choice of the army should be submitted to the ratification of the supreme national council. Nor were the chiefs of the senate at this moment men of bold aspirations or vigorous resolution. One consul, Galerius Trachalus, was noted as a florid declaimer, and nearly connected with the courtiers of the empire; the other, Silius Italicus, was an orator also, and a man of letters, distinguished in later years for his epic on the Punic Wars, virtuous and amiable in private life, discreet and dignified in office, but far more inclined to sing the praises of the Scipios than to emulate them.[1] He beheld Galba descend the Pyrenees and the Alps with his Iberian and Gaulish auxiliaries; but he was dreaming of Hannibal and the Carthaginians, and never woke to comprehend the actual invasion of his country, and subjugation of Rome by the sword.

The senate sanctions the election of Galba.

Galba, we have seen, had been proclaimed imperator on the third of April. He was still engaged in making his preparations, or watching events, within his own province, for the death of Vindex had alarmed, and almost shaken him from his purpose, when the news of Nero's condemnation and death was brought him by one who professed to have himself beheld the body of the tyrant. He no longer delayed to advance;

[1] See Clinton, *Fast. Rom.* i. 52. Martial says of Silius, vii. 63.:

"\. . . . Bis senis ingentem rexerat annum
Fascibus, asserto qui sacer orbe fuit."

Comp. also Plin. *Ep.* iii. 7. Galerius was an intimate friend of Otho, and a Galeria, possibly his sister, was wife to A. Vitellius, the son of the courtier Lucius, soon to be a prominent competitor for the purple. Tac. *Hist.* i. 90.

but it was necessary to take the long route by land, necessary also perhaps to have a personal interview with Virginius, and ascertain his real intentions and the disposition of the Gaulish legions. Arrived at Narbo, Galba was met by envoys from the senate, charged to convey the sanction of the republic to his claim. If the consuls could have hesitated for a moment in accepting him as their ruler, they would have been impelled by the necessity of counteracting the intrigues of Nymphidius Sabinus, the prefect of the prætorians, who, as we have seen, had withdrawn his cohorts from their fidelity to Nero, and now hastened to offer their services to his rival with many compliments and presents, asking to be installed, in return, in the highest offices of the state. But Galba was surrounded already by close adherents, who claimed the monopoly of his favours. T. Vinius, and Cornelius Laco, who shared and perhaps controlled his counsels, required him to reject these overtures. Nymphidius, stung with disappointment, conceived the hope of seizing the empire for himself. He thought himself secure of the prætorians, and, in order to gain the citizens also, alleged that he was descended, through his mother Nymphidia, from the emperor Caius. He had already sought their favour by surrendering some of Nero's creatures to their vengeance, and had made so much blood to flow, as to cause it to be declared in the senate that, if things went on thus, the tyranny of Nero himself would soon be regretted. Undoubtedly the prætorians as a body continued restless and discontented; they anticipated the loss of the imperial caresses, which under Nero had been extended to them alone, and augured that preference under the new reign would be given to the faithful legionaries. Galba's character for severity and parsimony was notorious, and his caustic saying passed from mouth to mouth, that he was wont to *choose*

Abortive attempt of Nymphidius.

his soldiers, not to buy them.[1] Nevertheless, the enterprise of Nymphidius was hopeless, and so one of his own followers had told him, assuring him that not one family in Rome would voluntarily accept him as Cæsar.[2] *What*, exclaimed the tribune Antonius, *shall we choose Nymphidia's son for our emperor, and sacrifice to him the child of Livia, as we have already sacrificed the child of Agrippina?* Still, even in the licentious camp of the prætorians, the question of empire was a question of descent and dynasty. The claims of the intriguer were laughed to scorn. The soldiers swore fidelity to Galba, and closed their gates against his rival. When he implored admittance and rashly trusted himself among them, he was attacked with sword and spear, and cut to pieces without scruple.[3]

Of Betuus Chilo, Obultronius and Cornelius Sabinus.

Meanwhile Galba was approaching. From the moment he learned that the senate had sworn in his name, he dropped the title of Legatus and assumed that of Cæsar, while to indicate that he was engaged in actual warfare in the state's behalf, he marched before his troops cloaked and belted.[4] Competitors, indeed, had risen in various quarters. Besides Clodius Macer in Africa, and Fonteius Capito in Germania, whose attempts have been already mentioned, we read of a Betuus Chilo in Gaul, an Obultronius and a Cornelius Sabinus in Spain. But these pretenders were put down by the adherents of the senate in their own districts; they were all slain in the field, or taken and executed; and Galba himself as the chosen of the senate,

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 5.: "Accessit Galbæ vox, pro republica honesta, ipsi anceps, legi ab se militem non emi." The term "legere" is derived from the ancient practice of the consul, the tribunes, and in some cases perhaps individual soldiers, choosing the best names for service from the roll.

[2] Plutarch, *Galb.* 13.

[3] Plutarch, *Galb.* 14.

[4] Suet. *Galb.* 11.; Dion, lxiv. 3.: *καὶ γέρων καὶ ἀσθενὴς τὰ νεῦρα ὤν.*

was held responsible for their deaths. The slaughter, indeed, of so many officers of rank caused some dismay at Rome, and this was increased when Galba demanded the sacrifice of such of Nymphidius's chief supporters as had not already killed themselves, among whom was the consul designate Cingonius Varro. The blood of Petronius Turpilianus, a consular, was also required without form of trial, as the man whom Nero had appointed to the command of his forces. The impression of Galba's severity was further enhanced when, on arriving at the Milvian Bridge, he replied to the presumptuous demands of Nero's marine battalions by ordering his men to charge them, and so entered Rome over their bodies. The citizens shuddered at the omen; but the scoffers who had made a jest of the emperor's gray hairs, and contrasted them with the beaming locks of their Claudian Apollo, were effectually silenced.[1]

Galba's vigour and severity in putting down his opponents.

On the first of January, 822, Galba, who had entered the city only a few days previously, assumed the consulship together with T. Vinius, and all classes hastened to the Capitol to sacrifice to the gods, and swear allegiance to the new emperor. Six months had elapsed since the death of Nero, and the citizens had had time to meditate on the step they were pledged to take, in transferring supreme command from the divine race of the Julii to a mere earthborn dynasty, to a family of their own kind and lineage. The heroic age of the empire had vanished in that short interval. Whatever antiquarians and courtiers might assert, the attempt to connect an imperial house with the national divinities would never succeed again. The illusion had perished like a dream of

Galba enters Rome, and assumes the consulship, Jan. 1. A. D. 69. A. U. 822.

[1] Plut. *Galb.* 15.; Tac. *Hist.* i. 7.: "Ipsa ætas Galbæ irrisui et fastidio erat, assuetis juventæ Neronis, et imperatores forma et decore corporis, ut mos est vulgi, comparantibus."

youth, and the poetry of Roman life was extinguished for ever. It was with no surprise, with no shame, that the citizens now heard of new pretenders to the empire. There was no other claim to empire but force, and wherever two or three legions were encamped together, there resided the virtue by which emperors are created. Notwithstanding the rapid rout and disappearance of Galba's rivals in the provinces, fresh competitors might arise at any moment, and almost in any place, and it was with deep anxiety that patriots inquired what was the state of the provinces, the temper of their garrisons, and the character of their chiefs. The East, they learned, was as yet undisturbed. Syria was held by Licinius Mucianus, a man who, after a career of dissipation and place-hunting in the city, had been removed thus far from home by the jealousy rather than the fears of Claudius, and had been raised unexpectedly to the government by Nero on the sudden disgrace of Corbulo. Vespasian, though commanding the forces now destined for the final reduction of Judea was under the orders of his proconsul, whose indolence was satisfied with the second place in the empire, when he might have contended with Galba for the first. Egypt, though nominally held direct from the emperor at Rome, was, in fact, dependent at this moment on the attitude of Syria; and thus the chief granary of the city was secured for the elect of the senate. Africa, on the death of Clodius Macer, had devoted itself to Galba; the two Mauretanias, Rhætia, Noricum, and Thrace, all governed nominally by imperial procurators, were swayed, in fact, by the impulse given them by the legions of the nearest frontiers.[1] On the Rhine the authority of the new emperor was less placidly admitted. Though the southern and central parts of

State of the provinces and attitude of the legions and their chiefs.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 11.

Gaul were generally well disposed to the government established at Rome, partly from their attachment to Vindex, the first of Galba's allies, partly from satisfaction with the privilege they enjoyed of the Roman franchise and immunity, there were certain spots on which the new emperor had laid his hand heavily, others, from their position connected in feeling with the legions of the Upper and Lower Germany, were less disposed to acquiesce in the decision of the city. The Germanic legions, divided into two armies, each three or four legions strong, were hostile to Galba.[1] The passions which had excited some of them to draw their swords against the troops of Vindex, were inflamed rather than allayed by victory. They wanted to present Virginius to the senate as the chosen of the army; they were not satisfied with his refusal to accept the empire: Galba had enticed him into his own camp, and carried him off, far from his own devoted legions, to Rome.[2] The Upper army, deprived of its favourite chief, disdained the rule of Hordeonius Flaccus, an old and sickly general. The Lower army had given some countenance to the attempt of Fonteius, and was ashamed of his easy overthrow. Galba humoured its vanity by sending it a consular legate, Aulus Vitellius; but the art and industry of this commander, in redressing its grievances and consulting its wishes, aimed at forming an interest for himself rather than riveting obedience to his master.[3] The four legions in Britain were occupied in their insular warfare; they were intent on securing estates and plunder, to form the basis of their own fortunes in the land of their adoption.

[1] Of the exact number of these legions, and the names by which they were distinguished, I shall have occasion to speak hereafter. The proper complement of these frontier provinces was four to each, as has been stated from Tacitus elsewhere, but one of them, at least, the Fourteenth, had been drafted into Britain.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* i. 9.

[3] Tac. *Hist.* i. 9. 52.

They took no interest in the mutations of empire at Rome.

A few days after the first of January letters reached the palace announcing a mutiny of the troops of Upper Germania. They demanded another emperor in the place of Galba, but left the choice to the senate and people. Galba had already contemplated adopting an associate in the empire, and had discussed the matter with the most intimate of his friends; for with the indecision of old age, or possibly from his natural character, he rarely acted on his own counsels, and was more commonly an instrument in the hands of others. The project had become known, and while the choice of the imperial conclave was yet uncertain, the citizens weighed among themselves the merits of the presumed candidates. The noblest birth and most ancient lineage were doubtless to be combined with high personal merits; the position of the Cæsar required to be strengthened by an appeal to popular prejudice, and no mere favourite of the palace could hope to satisfy the demands of the people at large. Accordingly, Vinius, despairing for himself, was content to urge the claims of Salvius Otho, while Laco and the freedman Icelus recommended Piso Licinianus, a descendant of the Crassi and Pompeii, a man whose high birth as well as his noble character had entailed on him the hatred of Nero, and subjected him to banishment. No time was now to be lost. Galba called together Vinius and Laco, with Marius Celsus, a consul designate, and Ducennius Geminus, prefect of the city, and *transacted* with them, in the phrase of Tacitus, the *comitia of the empire*. Their deliberations ended in the choice of Piso, to whom, from the antique severity of his habits and gravity of his demeanour, Galba was personally inclined. But these qualities were too similar to those of the emperor himself to

Mutiny of the legions of Upper Germania. Galba determines to adopt Piso as a colleague in the empire.

reassure such among the citizens as trembled at his growing unpopularity.[1]

Nothing can be more grave and dignified than this election of an emperor, as represented to us by the most thoughtful expounder of Roman constitutional history.[2] The aspirations of philosophers, the contrivances of practical statesmen, had, at last, and for once, attained their highest realization. Here was the best man of the commonwealth choosing the next best for his child, his associate, and his successor. The union of the Licinian and Scribonian houses with the Lutatian and Sulpician proclaimed the reinstatement of the Senatorial party, as opposed to the champions of the Plebs who had so long trampled on the faction of the Optimates. But besides this class demonstration, demanded by the position of the new dynasty, justified by the forfeiture of its rivals, the improvement now introduced on the example of Augustus, who chose a successor from his own family, not from the citizens out of doors,—the selection of a younger before an elder brother, for his personal qualifications, for an elder Piso had been passed over,—the well-known character of the adopted, his mature age, his blameless life, his constancy under adverse fortune,—all these circumstances combined to secure for this appointment the suffrage of patriots and statesmen beyond the ranks of any single order, or any party in the nation. The problem of government was solved:—could we but shut out the recollection of what preceded, and what followed,—the usurpation by one

This adoption made in the interest of the senate.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 14.: "Ea pars morum ejus, quo suspectior solicitis, adoptanti placuit."

[2] Of the six persons present, indeed, three at least perished immediately afterwards, and the account given us by Tacitus of the speech of Galba, and the demeanour of Piso, rests at best on popular rumour only. Tac. *Hist.* i. 15—17.: "Galba . . . in hunc modum locutus fertur . . . Pisonem ferunt" . . . . language in which our author sometimes disguises a dramatic invention of his own.

legion and the overthrow by another:—the proof was made patent to posterity that neither the creation of Galba, nor the adoption of Piso, was the work of the people itself, whose choice it was not pretended to solicit. Taken by itself no public act was ever more virtuous; but it had no firmer support than a fierce but unsubstantial reaction of public feeling, and its fortunes proved as baseless as its origin.

Galba submits his choice to the approval of his legions.

Galba conferred the empire with magnanimity; Piso accepted it respectfully and modestly, as a burden laid on him by his own order, which with him was equivalent to the commonwealth; the bystanders looked on with anxiety or envy; to the good, the innovation seemed fraught with peril, for it seemed to introduce a principle of rivalry within the walls of the palace itself; while the bad, with whom power at any price was the height of human ambition, grudged Piso his luck in having power, however precarious, thus thrust upon him. But how should this domestic arrangement be publicly ratified? what forms should be observed, what power in the state appealed to for its sanction? The association of Agrippa, and afterwards of Tiberius, with Augustus had been rather implied by significant charges than directly submitted to the approval of the State. Galba had no reserve: his only wish, in the interest of his tottering government, was to secure the most effective recognition of the act he had accomplished. Should he, then, declare his will to the people from the rostra, and invite their acceptance? or should he call for a vote of the senate? or, lastly, should he demand the salutation of the army? A soldier himself, and raised to power by the soldiers, Galba knew where his real strength lay, and he determined to lead his destined successor to the camp, and present him as such to his companions in arms: he might hope to engage the affections of the legions, which he sternly refused to buy with

money, by a compliment to their pride. On the 10th of January the emperor carried his purpose into execution. He briefly announced his choice to the soldiers, citing the example of Augustus, and appealing to the way in which the legionaries chose recruits; but it was in a storm of rain and thunder, such as in the olden time would have deterred the magistrate from holding a public election, and—a portent more fatal and now more unusual—he accompanied the announcement with no promise of a donative. Though the tribunes, and centurions, and the first rank of the soldiers responded with the expected acclamations, the serried files behind maintained a gloomy silence, sufficiently indicative of surprise and ill-humour. The officers themselves declared that a trifling largess would have sufficed to conciliate them; but Galba was stern and immovable. It was a moment when a wise man would have temporized; but Galba, intelligent and able as he was, had no wisdom.[1]

His untimely austerity in refusing them a donative.

From the camp the emperor turned to the senate-house. His address to the senators was not less curt than that to the soldiers, and was conceived perhaps in language scarcely less military. But it was followed immediately by a more graceful harangue from Piso; and, whatever doubt or jealousy might prevail in some sections of the assembly, on the whole the act was felt as a compliment to the order, and greeted with general approbation. The first care of the now constituted government was to send legates to control the disaffected or vacillating legions, the Fourth and the Eighteenth, on the Rhine; the next, to restore the finances of the state, and supply, with no irregular severity or injustice, the necessities of its chief, who found an empty treasury, with a hungry populace at its doors.

The adoption accepted with satisfaction by the senate.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 17.

Galba's first measure was to demand the restitution of the sums Nero had lavished on his unworthy favourites, computed at many millions of our money, leaving them, in scorn or pity, one tenth only of their plunder.[1] Thirty knights were constituted a board for the recovery of these moneys; but the inquisition, as might be expected, was not generally successful. The grantees, it was alleged, had squandered their grants as fast as they obtained them, and no assets were forthcoming to clear their debt to the public. It was some consolation that the wretches to whom Nero had given were found as poor as those from whom he had taken. Another measure was directed to secure power over the soldiers. Galba began by dismissing some of the tribunes of the prætorian and urban guard, intending, no doubt, gradually to rid himself of his least trustworthy officers; but the process was marked enough to cause alarm, while it was too slow to effect its object.[2] On the whole, neither the people nor the soldiers were satisfied with the new emperor's policy; but he was misled, apparently, by the counsels of Vinius, who induced him indiscreetly to spare the life of Tigellinus, when the most obnoxious of Nero's favourites were led, amid general acclamations, to the scaffold. Nothing, it is said, would have so delighted the citizens as to have seen Tigellinus dragged, like Sejanus, through the forum. They continued to call for his head in the theatre and the circus; but Vinius had engaged to marry his daughter, a widow with a large dower, and for her sake he persuaded Galba to screen the guilty father, and proclaim that he was sinking fast under a natural disease.[3] Nor were

Measures for the punishment of Nero's favourites.

Galba gives offence by sparing Tigellinus.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 20.; Plut. *Galb.* 16. See above, chap. lv.

[2] Tac. *Hist. l. c.*: "Nec remedium in cæteros fuit, sed metus initium."

[3] Plut. *Galb.* 17.

the frugal soldier's habits conducive to popularity. Trifling instances of his parsimony were reported, and possibly exaggerated. He had groaned aloud when a rich banquet was served him. He had rewarded the diligence of his chamberlain with a dish of lentils. He had marked his content with a distinguished flutist by presenting him with five denarii, drawn deliberately from his own pocket.[1] Such was the successor of the refined Augustus, and the magnificent Nero.

Otho, mortified at the adoption of Piso, determines to seize on the empire.

There was no man at Rome whose personal views were so directly thwarted by the elevation of Piso as Otho's; none felt himself so aggrieved, none was so bold, so unscrupulous in seeking redress. Otho still smarted under the recollection of his exile; for, honourable though it was, the command of a rude and distant province, protracted through the ten best years of life, could be regarded only as an exile; and yet even this was a milder penalty than he might expect from the jealousy of his new rulers.[2] If Galba, with the serenity of his age and character, could venture to disregard his rivalry, he expected no such indulgence from the younger Cæsar, too sure to retaliate on a man of years and position like his own the jealousy he had himself incurred from Nero. Long steeped in every luxury, and every sensual gratification exhausted, Otho held his life cheap: he resolved, from pride and caprice, to throw the die for empire as the only excitement now remaining, conscious of all its hazard, and content to perish if unsuccessful. Such a temper was a fearful symptom of the times. In this combination of voluptuousness and daring, in fascination of manners and recklessness of disposition,

[1] Suet. *Galb.* 12.

[2] Suet. *Otho*, 3.: "Provinciam administravit quæstoribus (i. e. by civil, not military officers), per decem annos:" i. e. from 811 (Dion, lxi. 11.) to 821.

in lust of place and power, and contempt for the dangers which environed them, Otho may remind us of Catilina; but, in atrocity of purpose, he stands a full step in advance, inasmuch as Catilina was impelled to treason at least by an urgent necessity, while Otho plunged into it from mere wantonness and the pleasure of the game. The excuse he pleaded could not have imposed even on himself. For a loyal subject, even though once a friend of Nero, there was no insecurity under Galba, nor need he have despaired of winning the confidence of Piso. He had gained credit for moderation in his ten years' government; a new career of virtue and reputation was open to him. But Otho was an elegant gambler: his virtues had been as capricious as his vices; he was weary of decorum, and now, long restrained from the gratification of his passion, he rushed back to the table with a madman's frenzy, prepared to stake his life against his evil fortune.

Otho tampers with the common soldiers.

And Otho had other counsellors than Catilina. Instead of being the centre of a group of vicious associates, the oracle of bankrupts and prodigals, he was himself swayed by false impostors, the victim of flatterers and diviners. His wife Poppæa, who had passed him in the race of ambition, had entertained a parasitical brood of astrologers about her; Otho had yielded to the same fascinations also; and when the promise of his soothsayer Ptolemæus, that he should outlive Nero, had turned out true, he embraced with transport a second revelation, that he should become associated in the empire.[1] Ptolemæus himself, when he found how much his patron's imagination was inflamed, spared no means to effect the fulfilment of his own pro-

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 23.; Plut. *Galb.* 22., by whom the man is called Ptolemæus. Suetonius, *Otho*, 4., gives him the name of Seleucus, which may be a confusion with the name of the soothsayer of Vespasian. *Hist.* ii. 78.

phecy. The state of the legions in the provinces, the temper of the soldiery at Rome, alike suggested grounds of hope, and furnished objects to tamper with. The troops which Galba had led from the heart of Spain to the Tiber felt aggrieved by the length of their pilgrimage; for, stationed in their frontier camps, the legions were not often required to make distant marches, and the battalions destined for the East or the West were generally transported almost to their appointed quarters by sea. Their toils might, indeed, be recompensed, the remembrance of the dust and heat of the way might be sweetened by largesses; but Galba had stiffly refused to administer such silver salves, and they now stood, cap in hand, soliciting, by gestures, if not with words, the liberality of the soldier's friend, such as Otho studied to represent himself. Accordingly, when he received the emperor at supper, his creature Mævius Pudens slipped a gratification into the hands of the guard; and to this general munificence he added lavish acts of generosity to individuals.[1] It is observable, indeed, that these efforts were directed to the lower ranks rather than to the officers. The tribunes and centurions were loyal to their imperator, faithful to their military oath; they were superior, perhaps, to the petty causes of discontent which moved the turbulent multitude. Nevertheless, in the general relaxation of discipline, and the confusion incident to the assemblage of various corps in the city, a movement in the ranks alone might spread with sympathetic excitement. We have often seen already how powerless were the officers against the contagion of insubordination among their men. The privates

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 24. According to Suetonius, Otho was so deeply involved in debt, that he declared he could not exist unless he became emperor (*Otho*, 5.): he must be cut in pieces, either by the soldiers in the field, or by his creditors in the forum. He raised many men for this desperate enterprise by selling a place about the court for a million of sesterces: "hoc subsidium tanti cœpti fuit."

were seduced, the legion was carried over. *Two manipulars engaged to transfer the empire of the Roman people*, says Tacitus, in memorable words, *and they did transfer it.*[1] Murmurs at the refusal of a largess, sighs for the licence of Nero's reign, disgust at the prospect of marching again to the frontiers, ran like wildfire along the ranks; the news of the revolt in Germany shook the common faith in Galba's authority, and as early as the fourteenth of January, the fifth day from Piso's appointment, the prætorians were prepared to carry Otho to the camp at nightfall, had not their leaders feared their making some blunder in the darkness, and seizing perhaps on the wrong man in the confusion of the moment. Yet delay was dangerous; indications of the conspiracy were here and there escaping; it was only the perverse jealousy of Laco, who refused to regard any suggestions which had not originated with himself, that prevented its discovery and prompt suppression.

He is carried off to the prætorian camp.

On the morning of the fifteenth, Galba was sacrificing before the Palatine temple of Apollo, when the aruspex informed him that the entrails were inauspicious, and portended a foe in his own household. Otho was standing by. He heard the words, and smiled at their import, which corresponded with his secret designs. Presently his freedman Onomastus announced that his architect awaited him at home. The signal was preconcerted: it implied that the soldiers were ready, and the project ripe. He quitted the emperor's presence in haste, alleging that the architect was come to inspect with him some new-purchased premises: leaning on his freedman's arm, with the air of a careless lounger, he descended through the house

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 25.: "Suscepere duo manipulares Imperium pop. Rom. transferendum; et transtulerunt." "Manipulares," privates: but one was, "tesserarius," an orderly; the other, "optio," an adjutant: both picked from the ranks for special service.

of Tiberius into the Velabrum, then turned to the right to the Golden Milestone beneath the Capitol in front of the Roman Forum.[1] Here he was met by some common soldiers, three and twenty in number, who hailed him at once as imperator, thrust him into a litter, and, with drawn swords, bore him off, alarmed as he was at their fewness, across the Forum and the Suburra. Passing unchallenged through the wondering bystanders, they reached the gates of the prætorian camp, where guard was kept by the tribune Martialis, who, whether privy to the plot or bewildered by the suddenness of the crisis, opened to them without hesitation, and admitted the pretender within the enclosure.

Galba is deserted by the soldiers.

Meanwhile Galba was still sacrificing, *importuning the gods of an empire no longer his*, when the report arrived that some senator, his name unknown, was being hurried to the camp[2]: a second messenger announced that it was Otho; this man was followed by a crowd of all ranks and orders, breathlessly vociferating what they had seen or heard; but some still extenuating, like courtiers, the real magnitude of the danger. One cohort of the guard was stationed at the palace gates. It was judged expedient to ascertain first the temper of this battalion; but Galba was advised to keep out of sight and reserve his authority to the last, while Piso went forth to address it. The soldiers listened respectfully, and stood to their arms, with the instinct of discipline; but there was no clamour, no enthusiasm among them. Officers were sent in haste to secure a corps of the Illyrian army, which bivouacked

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 27. The "house of Tiberius" was the first imperial addition to the original mansion of Augustus on the Palatine. It extended along the western side of the hill above the Velabrum. This passage shows that, as has been before suggested, there were common thoroughfares through the courts of the palace.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* i. 29.: "Ignarus interim Galba et sacris intentus fatigabat alieni jam imperii Deos."

in the portico of Agrippa; but they were ill-received, and even thrust back with violence. Others again sought to gain the Germanic cohorts, drafted from their legions by Nero for service in the East, and recently recalled precipitately from Alexandria. These men were better disposed towards Galba, on account of the care he had bestowed on them after their harassing voyage; nevertheless they hesitated to arm, and maintained an ominous silence. None ventured to try the disposition of the marine battalions, still resenting the slaughter of their comrades; and when three bold tribunes went resolutely to the camp of the prætorians, to dissuade them from their threatened mutiny, they were repelled with curses, and one of them disarmed by force. The imperator was deserted by his soldiers; but the populace rushed tumultuously into the palace, demanding the death of Otho, and the destruction of his associates, in the same tone of ferocious levity with which they would have called for the gladiators or the lions in the circus. Galba could derive no confidence from this empty clamour; as an old soldier he despised the nerveless mob of the streets; he still debated with Vinius and others whether to keep within doors, guarding the approaches, and give the traitors time to return to a better mind, or go forth at once to meet them, and quell the mutiny with a word and frown, or perish in arms as became a Roman general.[1]

He goes forth from the palace to meet the mutineers.

Vinius urged the former course; Laco, as usual, opposed him; but assuredly Laco's counsel was the worthiest, and might well be deemed the safest. Galba, always it would seem irresolute, turned wistfully from one to the other, but the soldier's spirit prevailed, and he determined to act. He allowed Piso, however, to precede him to the camp. Scarce had the younger Cæsar gone than

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 31, 32.

a report was circulated that Otho had been slain by the prætorians. All doubted; many disbelieved: presently men were heard to vouch strongly for the fact; they had seen it with their own eyes. The report was false, and possibly it was spread and confirmed by the usurper's adherents, to draw the emperor from his palace walls, and betray him into the midst of his enemies. The artifice, if such it was, succeeded. Knights, senators, and people crowded round Galba, loudly murmuring at the disappointment of their revenge, and calling upon him to issue from the gates, and extinguish the last sparks of treason by his presence. Arrayed in a light quilted tunic, not in steel, and obliged by age and weakness to adopt the conveyance of a litter, Galba put himself at the head of the surging multitude.[1] One of the guards forced himself into his presence, and, waving a bloody sword, exclaimed that he had killed Otho. *Comrade,* said he, *who ordered you?* a touching rebuke which thrilled the hearts of the noblest of the citizens, and was long treasured in their memory as the true eloquence of an imperator.[2]

Otho proclaimed emperor in the camp.

By this time the revolt had gathered head within the camp. The movement was confined to the private soldiers; so, at least, we are assured; and it is almost affecting to remark the anxiety of the patriotic historian to explain that the first instance of successful mutiny at Rome was the work of the common herd, and in no sense that of their officers. Tribunes and centurions were disarmed, or kept aloof, while the crowd, without leaders and without order, moved by the common instinct of

[1] Suet. *Galb.* 19.: "Loricam tamen induit linteam, quanquam haud dissimulans parum adversus tot mucrones profuturam."

[2] Tac. *Hist.* i. 35.: "Commilito, inquit, quis jussit?" The incident is mentioned also by Suetonius, Plutarch, and Dion. It will be remembered that Augustus, the princeps and the tribune, shrank from calling the soldiers his "comrades."

turbulent disaffection, thrust Otho between their standards fixed around the tribunal, on the very spot where a gilded image of Galba might remind them of the oath which bound them to his person. Otho himself, no longer his own master, hardly conscious perhaps of his position, stretched forth his arms to the right and left, kissing his hands towards the crowd, wherever the loudest shout resounded, *courting empire*, says Tacitus, *with the demeanour of a slave*.[1] He writhed under his ignominy as the puppet of a mob, and hesitated to assume the tone of command; but when the marine battalions advanced in a body, and swore fidelity to his orders, he felt himself at last an imperator, and addressed his partisans with the spirit and self-possession of their legitimate chief. The ceremony of installation was complete. Otho commanded the armouries to be opened, and the men rushed, prætorians and legionaries, Romans and auxiliaries, all mingled together, and seized the first weapons that came to hand, without distinction of rank or post in the service.

Galba and Piso halt in the forum.

The buzz of movement to and fro, and the discordant cries of the soldiers, penetrated from the camp into the city, and Piso, checking his first impulse to confront the mutineers in person, awaited Galba's arrival in the forum, and took his own place in the emperor's escort. The accounts now grew momentarily worse and worse; the old man seems to have lost his presence of mind, and allowed his followers to urge on him their timid and conflicting counsels, to return to the palace, to repair to the Capitol, to occupy the rostra. Laco would have seized the opportunity to wreak his private grudge by ordering the assassina-

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 36.: "Omnia serviliter pro dominatione." According to Suetonius (*Otho*, 6.), he said that he would accept only just as much power as they chose to leave him: "Id demum se habiturum quod ipsi sibi reliquissent."

tion of Vinius, under pretence that he was a friend of Otho, and a traitor to the emperor; but Vinius was on his guard, the moment passed, and Galba was still surrounded by the whole body of his friends, whose only hope now lay in a spontaneous rising of the people against the soldiery.

Otho advances at the head of the soldiers.

The mutual jealousy, indeed, which had long subsisted between these two classes might still have changed the aspect of affairs. The urban populace hated the soldiery, with whom they had no family ties, and so many of whom they now saw thronging their streets as the favourites of the Cæsar, and gifted with privileges which encroached upon their comforts and galled their pride. At this moment all the populace were in the streets, or filled the basilicas and temples; their eyes turned in amazement from side to side, their ears caught at every sound; alarmed and indignant, they awaited the event in silence.[1] With nobles for their leaders, and armed retainers of the nobles to support them, they might have proved not unequal to a conflict even with the trained swordsmen of the legions. And Otho was assured that they were arming. No time was to be lost. With colours flying and martial music, with measured step and naked weapons, advanced the battalions under his direction to the capture of the city and the overthrow of the laws.

Assassination of Galba, followed by that of Vinius and Piso.

A single cohort still surrounded Galba, when, at the sight of these advancing columns, its standard-bearer tore the emperor's image from his spear-head, and dashed it on the ground. The soldiers were at once decided for Otho: swords were drawn, and every symptom of favour for Galba among the bystanders was repressed

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 40.: "Quale magni metus et magnæ iræ silentium est."

by menaces, till they dispersed and fled in horror from the forum. At last the bearers of the emperor's litter overturned it at the Curtian pool beneath the Capitol. In a moment enemies swarmed around his body. A few words he muttered, which have been diversely reported: some said that they were abject and unbecoming; others affirmed that he presented his neck to the assassin's sword, and bade him strike, *if it were good for the republic:* but none listened, none perhaps heeded the words actually spoken; Galba's throat was pierced, but even the author of his mortal wound was not ascertained, while his breast being protected by the cuirass, his legs and arms were hacked with repeated gashes. The murder of Galba was followed by that of Vinius, who was said to have in vain exclaimed that Otho could have no interest in his death: but there was evidently among the Romans a deep dislike to this man, and they were prone to believe in his treachery. Lastly, the noble Piso was attacked, and though, protected for a moment by the devotion of a centurion, whose fidelity is the only bright spot in this day of horrors, he made his way into the temple of Vesta, the goddess could offer no secure asylum, he was dragged forth by the instruments of Otho, under special orders to hunt him out and despatch him. The heads of all the three were brought to the victor of the day, and while he gazed with emotions of respect on Galba's, with some pity on that of Vinius, Piso's, it is said, he regarded with barbarous and unmanly satisfaction. These bloody trophies were then paraded through the streets by the brutal soldiers, many of whom thrust their reeking hands above the crowd, swearing that they had struck the first, the second, the tenth, or the twentieth blow; and when the distribution of rewards arrived, not less, we are assured, than a hundred and twenty claims were presented to the government from the pretended authors of the most

notable feats of arms.[1] These ferocious soldiers were fully alive to their political importance, and determined to insist upon it. The prætorians demanded the right of choosing their own prefects, and appointed Plotius Firmus and Licinius Proculus, while Flavius Sabinus, the elder brother of Vespasian, was nominated warden of the city.[2]

Galba a specimen of the soldier-noble of Rome.

From our slender accounts of the emperor whose brief reign and sudden fall have been just related, we may conceive him a fine specimen of the soldier-nobles of his time, undoubtedly the finest class of Roman citizens. The men who governed the provinces, nobles by birth, senators in rank, judges and administrators as well as captains by office, represent the highest and largest training of the Roman character; for they combined a wide experience of men and affairs with the feelings of a high-born aristocracy, and the education of polished gentlemen. Long removed from daily intercourse with their more frivolous peers in the city, they escaped for the most part contamination with the worst elements of society at home; they retained some of the purity together with the vigour of the heroes of the republic; they preserved in an era of ideologists or sensualists the strength of character and manly principle which had laid the deep foundations of the Roman empire. They were conquerors, but they were also organizers; and so far, with respect at least to subjects of inferior race, they deserve

[1] Plutarch, who treats the story of Galba throughout with strange indifference, and almost levity, applies here a line from Archilochus (c. 27.):

. ἑπτὰ γὰρ νεκρῶν παρόντων, οὓς ἐμάρψαμεν ποσὶ,
χίλιοι φονῆες ἐσμέν.

The body of Galba was consumed privately by one of his freedmen, named Argius,—it is pleasing to record these traits of class-attachment,—and the ashes laid in his family sepulchre. His villa stood on the Janiculum, and his remains are said to repose in the gardens of the Villa Pamphili. Ampère, *Hist. Rom. à Rome*, § 4.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* i. 41—46.; Suet. *Galb.* 20.; Dion, lxiv. 6.

to be reputed civilizers. They impressed on the mind of the Orientals a fear, upon that of the Occidentals an admiration, of Rome, which taught them first to acquiesce in the yoke, and afterwards to glory in it. These were the representatives of her moral power of whom Rome should have made her idols, alike for the glory of their exploits and the influence of their will and character;—not the Claudii and Domitii, whom the chance of family adoption had raised to the lip-worship of courtiers and time-servers. We are tempted to gaze again and again, in the decline and decay before us, on the legitimate succession of true Roman nobility, to renew our admiration of its sense of duty, its devotion to principles of obedience and self-control, unshaken by the cavils of the schools, serving the emperor as the Genius of Discipline, worshipping all the gods after the custom of antiquity, but trusting no god but its country.

Galba a good proconsul, but not a good emperor.

The Romans considered Galba to have lost the empire by mismanagement. After summing up his qualities,—his desire for fame, but dignified reserve in awaiting rather than seeking it, his abstinence from extortion, his private frugality, his public parsimony, the moderation of his passions. the mediocrity of his genius, the slowness and discretion of his conduct, which passed with many for wisdom, finally his freedom from vices rather than possession of virtues,—Tacitus, speaking solemnly in the name of his countrymen, declares that all men would have pronounced him fit to bear rule at Rome, had he but never ruled.[1] Such a judgment it is impossible for us now to question; nevertheless, there seems nothing to be said, as far as our evidence goes, against his administration, except his fatal stiffness with regard to the expected donative. The great act of his short reign, the appointment of an

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 49.: "Omnium consensu capax Imperii nisi imperasset."

associate, was apparently as wise as magnanimous, and the choice, itself probably judicious, was certainly determined by no unworthy motive. It is true, however, that the character of the legionary chief was generally little fitted for rule in the city. The camp officers were rarely men of liberal minds or elevated views: though the control of a province might seem, at first sight, a proper introduction to the government of an empire, it must never be forgotten that the province was no more than a camp to the proconsul, and that he seldom stepped, in his administration of it, beyond the curt and rigid forms of military law. Though these stern soldiers were deeply imbued with respect for the name of the senate at a distance, they were not likely to restrain their wills in deference to it, when actually face to face. And accordingly we find that Galba, when he appointed Piso his colleague, sought the ratification of his act in the first instance, not from the senate, but from the soldiers. And if we lament, in him, an indecision at the most trying moments, such as we should not expect in one accustomed to command, we may ascribe it less to natural infirmity of character, or the timidity of old age, than to a rising consciousness that, with every qualification for governing a province, he was unequal to the burden of empire.[1]

Otho is threatened immediately with a rival in Vitellius.

Nevertheless, no small proportion at this time of the citizens in the toga, and all the citizens under arms, were fully convinced that a chief of the legions was quite fit to be an emperor. We have seen how many pretenders to the purple started up at the moment when

[1] Suetonius, who describes Galba's figure with his usual minuteness,—"Statura fuit justa, capite præcalvo, oculis cæruleis, adunco naso,"—adds that his feet and hands were so much distorted by gout, that he could neither wear shoes nor unroll a volume. He was also disfigured and incommoded by a large wen on his right side. At the same time he boasted of his health and strength: ἔτι μοι μενὸς ἔμπεδόν ἐστιν, he had said, only a few days before his death,

the world abandoned Nero. One after another the star of Galba had extinguished these lesser luminaries; but new competitors for power were ready to take their place, and had his short career been but a little protracted, Galba too would soon have been required to come forth and defend his power by arms. The next change in the succession served only to strengthen this necessity. From the moment that he stepped through an emperor's blood into the palace of the Cæsars, Otho was made aware that he in his turn must fight if he would retain his newly acquired honours. It was in vain that the senate prostrated itself obsequiously before the murderer of its late champion, accepted him as emperor, and heaped upon him all the titles and functions of the sovereign power.[1] He turned with bitter contempt from the vile flatteries of the populace, and the acclamations with which they greeted him by the name of Otho-Nero, as if they anticipated from his accession only a renewal of the orgies of the circus and the theatres, to the heralds who followed one another in quick succession, bringing him accounts of the progress of sedition in Gaul, and the formidable attitude assumed by Vitellius, at the head of the armies of the Rhine.[2] The temper of this upstart, the dissolute

Galb. 20, 21. C. Galba, the emperor's father, was deformed. See the jokes upon him by Augustus and others in Macrob. *Saturn.* ii. 4. 6.: "Ego te monere possum, corrigere non possum." "Ingenium Galbæ male habitat."

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 47.: "Accurrunt patres, decernitur Othoni tribunitia potestas, et nomen Augusti, et omnes principum honores."

[2] It was to humour the populace, we may believe, that Otho himself, if we are to credit Suetonius and Plutarch, assumed, in some of his despatches, the odious name of Nero, and ordered the tyrant's statues to be restored. Tacitus only mentions that he was "supposed to have contemplated" celebrating the memory of Nero, and that some persons took upon themselves to re-erect his statues. Otho contented himself with paying that honour to Poppæa, of whom he seems to have been passionately enamoured. He contemplated also marrying Statilia, the relict of his predecessor, no doubt to strengthen his title in the estimation of the populace. Suet. *Otho*, 10.

son of one of the most profligate courtiers of the late reigns, was unfavourably known at Rome, and the prospect of a civil war, from which Galba's good fortune had saved the state, was aggravated by the personal defects of both competitors. Already the best and wisest of the citizens looked elsewhere for the saviour of the commonwealth, and argued from the vigour and discretion of Vespasian, then commanding in Palestine, that he would be the fittest man to step in between them, and wrest the prize from both.[1]

The best citizens already look to Vespasian.

Aulus Vitellius, whose father Lucius had been censor with Claudius, and thrice consul, was born in 768, and was now accordingly in his 55th year, older by seventeen years than his rival Otho. His early intimacy with Tiberius at Capreæ had obtained for him a scandalous notoriety; he humoured with equal compliance the follies of succeeding Cæsars, and drove the chariot in the circus with Caius, or played dice with Claudius. Nero's favour he gained by his adroitness in combating the young prince's coyness, and insisting on his coming forward to play and sing at a public festival. Nevertheless, this unscrupulous courtier had not wholly abandoned himself to the vices and pleasures of the city. He had obtained some reputation in rhetoric and letters, and, moreover, he had served as proconsul, and again as legatus in Africa, where he had acquired a reputation for uprightness.[2] At Rome, however, he had given the rein to his cupidity, or, possibly, the public voice was there more addicted to calumny. It was

The character of Vitellius.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 50.

[2] Suet. *Vitell.* 3—5.: "Singularem innocentiam præstitit." Such testimony in favour of a man who has received no quarter from ordinary history ought to be specified. Yet it is open to us to enquire whether the "innocence" here signalized implies equity and moderation towards the provincials, or indulgence and popular manners in connexion with Roman officials, the quæstors, and proconsular staff.

whispered that he had robbed some temples of their golden ornaments, and replaced them with baser metal. But his profusion, we are assured, was at least equal to his avarice, and when Galba chose him for command in Germany, his resources were so exhausted that he was obliged to leave his wife and children in a hired lodging, while he let his own handsome mansion to strangers. The Romans were astonished, it is said, at the selection, for at the moment the post was of more than ordinary importance. They surmised that he had found a powerful friend in Vinius, attached to him by their common interest in the Blue faction of the circus; or insinuated that with the jealous emperor his bad character was itself a merit.[1]

Vitellius is incited to revolt by the legions in Gaul.

The combat between the troops of Vindex and Virginius had left deep bitterness behind, though the one chief was dead, and the other had relinquished his command. The victorious legions were those of the German frontier, almost the remotest garrisons on the continent, and accordingly the furthest cut off from the sympathies of Rome and Italy. Few, indeed, of the rank and file of these armies were really Romans in birth, their cohorts, originally levied within the Alps, had long been recruited in the provinces beyond, and it was by Gaulish hands that Gaul was now for the most part defended. Still, even to natives of Narbo or Tolosa, service on the Rhine had been a distant exile; they had long sighed to exchange the winters of the North for the sunny climes, not yet forgotten, of their birth; while even the land of the Sequani or the Ædui, on which they had fought and conquered the battalions of Vindex, they regarded as foreign and hostile, and looked wistfully on its wealth as the legitimate reward of their victory. Between these

[1] Suet. *Vitell.* 3—7.

regions and Italy lay the Claudian colony of Lugdunum, the inhabitants of which were devoted to the name of their patron Nero, and jealous of the rival strongholds of Augustodunum and Vesontio, recently favoured by Galba with a remission of tribute. Every rumour from Rome passed through their city, and they made use of their position to embitter, by fiction or misrepresentation, the feud between the legions, and foster jealous feelings toward the emperor of the senate.[1] Vitellius, as we have seen, was sent by Galba to command the army of Lower Germany. He had reached its quarters at the beginning of December. His mission really was to soothe rather than punish, and instead of the dismissal of centurions and decimation of manipulars, with which the Lyonese had threatened them, the soldiers found, to their surprise, that punishments were remitted, honours distributed, and the ill-treatment they had suffered through the avarice and injustice of their late chief alleviated. Thus far Vitellius, we may suppose, carried out the instructions furnished him by Galba; but the profuseness of his liberality, with borrowed funds, seemed to betoken already ulterior designs, and he soon lent an ear to the suggestions of Allienus Cæcina and Fabius Valens, legates of two legions on the Rhine, who urged him to put himself at the head of a general insurrection. They flattered him with the assurance of the regard in which he was held by the soldiers, the provincials, and the citizens of Gaul; promised him the aid of Hordeonius with the troops of Upper Germany; persuaded him that the garrisons of Britain would cross the sea to join or follow him, that the subjects of Rome, far and wide, were ripe for revolt against the senate, that the empire that feeble body had ventured to confer was a shadow which would vanish in the first flash of his

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 51.: "Infensa Lugdunensis colonia et, pertinaci pro Nerone fide, fœcunda rumoribus."

weapons. It was well, they added, for Virginius to hesitate. His origin was obscure; his father was a simple knight; and he might safely decline the imperium he could not securely wield. With Vitellius it was otherwise; his birth was noble, his father had been censor and thrice consul; his rank made a private station dangerous, but was not unworthy of the highest elevation.[1] To a man who had once admitted the idea of treason this reasoning was not without its weight. That it had been used to him at all made him an object of suspicion, and to be suspected, as the parasite of four Cæsars well knew, was a sure presage of disgrace.

Cæcina and Valens, partisans of Vitellius.

The two officers above-mentioned will play a considerable part in the events which are to follow. Of Cæcina's previous history we only know that Galba had advanced him, as a zealous partisan, from the quæstorship in Bætica to the command of a legion in Upper Germany, but he had incurred the emperor's displeasure, and been subjected to a prosecution for embezzlement. The crimes of Valens had been more daring. At the head of the First legion in Lower Germany he had urged Virginius to assume the purple, and on his refusal had pretended to disclose his intrigues to Galba. By him the death of Fonteius had been effected; and, though Galba had been assured that Fonteius was a traitor, many believed that this charge also had been forged by Valens, as an excuse for ridding himself of a man who, like Virginius, had declined his treasonable suggestions. Valens now complained that his merits were not duly rewarded, and the arrival of the weak and vain Vitellius seemed

[1] The genealogists had kept pace with the ascent of the Vitellii, and had already traced them from Faunus, the legendary king of the Aborigines, and Vitellia, a Sabine divinity. Their historic celebrity, however, did not date beyond P. Vitellius, born at Nuceria, a Roman knight, procurator of Augustus, who left four sons, all of whom became magistrates and senators. Suet. *Vitell.* 1, 2.

to offer another opportunity of pushing forward a candidate for the purple, behind whose cloak he might himself rise to honours. For it was one of the most fatal symptoms of national decline, that unlawful ambition was not confined to the highest object, but that officers, far too low in rank and dignity to aspire to empire themselves, were eager to thrust it upon others for the lesser rewards of a subordinate.[1]

Vitellius proclaimed emperor by the Germanic legions.

Vitellius still hesitated: his ideas were slow, and his spirit not equal to the conception of a great design. He was more intent on sensual gratifications than the prosecution of a higher though more criminal ambition. But meanwhile the murmurs of the soldiers were increasing, and the Treviri and Lingones, the most powerful of the states near which they were quartered, resenting the penalties Galba had inflicted on them for their leaning to the side of Nero, fanned the flame of discontent. When, on the first of January, the men were drawn up to take the oath to the emperor, the legions of the Lower province performed their duty coldly and reluctantly, but those of the Upper absolutely refused to repeat the words of their tribunes, tore down the images of Galba, and trampled them under foot. Yet such was still their sense of discipline that they insisted on the oath being administered to them in the names of *the Senate and People*, according to the usage of the republic.[2] The determination of the soldiers was irresistible. Four only of the centurions of the Eighteenth legion made an effort to save Galba's images, and they were seized and thrown into chains; while Hordeonius looked on without attempting to enforce his authority. The standard-bearer of the Fourth legion, which also belonged to the Upper province, was sent to Colonia

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 52, 53.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* i. 55.: "Ac ne reverentiam imperii exuere viderentur, Senatus populique Rom. obliterata jam nomina sacramento advocabant."

Agrippina, and brought the news to Vitellius the next night at supper, of the defection of the whole Upper army from Galba. They were ready to serve the Senate and People, but they demanded another Imperator. The moment for decision had arrived. The advisers of Vitellius were prompt and clamorous, and he yielded almost passively to their instances. Presented as their leader, he was accepted with acclamations: his name was passed from mouth to mouth, while those of Senate and People ceased to be repeated at all.[1] The whole of the legions on the frontier combined in open revolt against the faction of Galba, and were supported by the resources, freely tendered, of the province behind them.

Vitellius with the main body of his forces, prepares to march southward in three divisions.

A military revolution had commenced. Vitellius was the emperor of the army. In assigning the offices of the imperial household, it was from the army alone that he made his appointments. His stewards, secretaries, and chamberlains, the most confidential of his ministers, were chosen, not from the freedmen of his family, but from Roman knights, officers of the prætorium; privates received money from the fiscus to buy their indulgences from the centurions.[2] The ferocity with which they demanded the punishment of the most obnoxious officers was approved and gratified, and the vengeance they solicited for the death of Fonteius was only half eluded by the substitution of a centurion who struck the blow for the chief of the galleys under whose orders he had acted. The man who was thus withdrawn from their fury seems to have been a Gaul by birth, though his name, Julius Burdo, shows that he was adopted into the gens of the imperial family; and he owed his life, it

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 56, 57.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* i. 58.: "Vacationes centurionibus ex fisco numerat." Comp. *Ann.* i. 17.: "Hinc sævitiam centurionum et vacationes munerum redimi."

may be presumed, to the policy of Vitellius, anxious not to offend the provincials, whose aid he required, and by whom his forces were supplied. On the same account, no doubt, Civilis, a leader of Batavian auxiliaries, was snatched from the hands of the legionaries, and the fidelity of the light native cohorts he commanded as a separate corps was preserved to the common cause. The armies of the Rhine seem to have numbered at this time seven legions: an eighth, the Italic, was stationed at Lugdunum. The garrisons of Britain signified their adhesion to the league, and contributed perhaps some battalions to the force now preparing to descend upon Italy. But the great interests of the empire were still sacred in the eyes of the usurper, and he would not leave the frontiers defenceless. Some cohorts were to be left behind in the principal stations, and these reinforced by provincial levies. Meanwhile the armament destined for the enterprise was divided into three bodies. Valens was directed to take the route of the Cottian Alps, with the first, comprising some chosen corps of the Lower army marshalled under the eagle of the Fifth legion, amounting, with numerous cohorts of allies, to forty thousand men. Cæcina undertook to penetrate the Pennine pass; and his force, though nominally but one legion, the Twenty-first, numbered thirty thousand. The main body, led by Vitellius himself, was to follow; and this too was amply supplied with battalions of German auxiliaries. These foreigners were among the most devoted to the new emperor's fortunes. They exulted in the title of Germanicus which he was now induced to assume, as chief, not as conqueror, of the German people: perhaps they were the more delighted at his refusing to accept the hostile appellation of Cæsar.[1] A favourable omen contributed to raise their spirits. At the

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 62.: "Nomen Germanici Vitellio statim inditum: Cæsarem se appellari etiam victor prohibuit." Suet. *Vitell.* 8.

moment when Valens commenced his march southwards, an eagle, the bird of empire and of Rome, soared above the heads of the soldiers, and, unmoved by their cries, sailed majestically before them, and *marshalled them the way that they were going.*

Valens advances through Gaul, and crosses the Mont Genèvre.

Trèves, accustomed to the sight of the legions, received the moving masses without distrust. Metz, in its terror, made a show of opposition, which was expiated with blood. At Laon the news of the death of Galba caused no halt; but it served to remove all hesitation in the minds of the provincials, who, while they hated both Vitellius and Otho, inclined naturally to him from whose wrath they had most to apprehend. At Langres a corps of Batavi, detached from the Fourteenth legion, showed some indisposition to join. They were reduced by force of arms, some examples made, and the united armament again swept onward. Autun was commanded to furnish large supplies; its refusal might at least offer a plea for plunder; but fear counselled prompt obedience. Lyons gave its quota without reluctance.[1] The Italic legion was here required to join, and a single cohort of the Eighteenth was left behind in its place. Between Lyons and Vienne existed an ancient animosity. Galba had recently mulcted the one city and enriched the other. The Lyonnese now prompted the Vitellian soldiers to avenge their injuries on their more favoured

[1] An apology is due, perhaps, for using the modern names of these cities. In writing the history of the Romans in Gaul at this period we have this difficulty, that the old Gaulish names of the cities had generally become disused, such as Divodurum (Metz), while the later appellations, Mediomatrici, Leuci, Treviri, Lingones, belong to neither ancient history nor modern. Tacitus still employs the circumlocution civitas Leucorum, Lingonum, &c. I might write Augustodunum, Lugdunum, or Vienna, but it seemed better to preserve uniformity at least on the same page. It will be observed that I generally adopt the modern names of rivers rather than the ancient, because use has sanctioned it, and in fact they are in most cases identical in origin, and only vary in pronunciation.

neighbours. The Viennese, in consternation, came forth in the garb of suppliants, and, by a bribe, it was said, administered skilfully to Valens, obtained an indulgent hearing. But Valens himself was obliged in turn to bribe his own soldiers, by a largess of three hundred sesterces to each. At every place indeed where he halted his devouring legions, and at every place which he was induced to pass without halting, this rapacious chief required to be gratified with money, under threats of plunder and conflagration. His line of march from Vienne lay through the country of the Allobroges and Vocontii, and so by the well-trodden pass of the Mont Genèvre into Italy.[1]

Cæcina marches through the country of the Helvetii, and over the Great St. Bernard.

Meanwhile the other stream of invasion was descending through the country of the Helvetii, a people fiercer and more brave than the long pacified western Gauls, and not yet aware of the death of Galba, whose name was still remembered perhaps with respect in the valleys of the Rhone and Drance.[2] The licence Cæcina allowed his soldiers was here fiercely resented, and the course of the expedition was tracked with blood and fire, while the Roman garrisons in Rhætia were invited to attack the natives in the rear. Driven from fastness to fastness, the Helvetii made their last defence behind the walls of Aventicum, and yielded only to the threat of a regular siege, of storm, sack, and slaughter. Cæcina was now satisfied with the execution of their leader, Julius Alpinulus, and left the other captives to be dealt with by Vitellius at his leisure.[3] The poor

[1] The mention of Lucus Augusti or Luc indicates the route taken by this division of the Vitellians, which must have crossed from the Drôme to the Durance, and so by Embrun to the Col Genèvre. Tac. *Hist.* i. 62—66.

[2] Sulpicius Galba, the legatus of Cæsar and conqueror of the Seduni, was the emperor's great-grandfather. Suet. *Galb.* 3.

[3] Aventicum, the modern Avenches. Tac. *Hist.* i. 67—70. Its

people were allowed to send a deputation to the emperor; but he gave them a harsh reception, while his soldiers furiously threatened them: they obtained grace at last through the artful eloquence of Claudius Cossus, one of their number, who swayed the feelings of the multitude to compassion, not less boisterously expressed than their recent anger.

Otho prepares for war, but offers terms of accommodation.

While this double invasion, like that of the Cimbri and Teutones of old, was thus beetling on the summits of the Alps, Otho was preparing to receive it with alertness and intrepidity. Bounding from his voluptuous couch at the first sound of the trumpet, cheerful at the sight of danger as he had been anxious and desperate amidst luxuries and honours, his first aim was to secure the good wishes of the best men, by sacrificing the detested Tigellinus, and releasing Celsus, a trusty adherent of Galba, whom he had saved before from his own soldiers and reserved perhaps with a view to the crisis which had now arrived. Here was an example of pardon for the past, and hope also of pardon for the future. The Vitellians, it proclaimed, need not despair: let them repent of their revolt and resume their allegiance to the chief of the state, accepted by the Senate and People. The emperor deigned to make overtures of conciliation to Vitellius himself. He addressed him with more than one letter, in which, with fair words and flattery, he offered him money and favour, and any tranquil retreat he might himself select for the enjoyment of ease and luxury in a private station.[1] Vitellius, too, on his part, was

sufferings were afterwards repaid by the foundation of a colony under Vespasian. The pretty but, unfortunately, spurious epitaph on Julia Alpinula—"Exorare patris necem non potui," &c.—refers to this event.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 74. Suetonius goes further, and affirms that Otho "offered himself" as colleague to Vitellius, and proposed to marry his daughter. *Otho.* 8. Dion says that he proposed to accept Vitellius as his own colleague. lxiv. 10.

equally timid, or equally politic, and several messages of compliment passed between the rivals, while each was determined,—for one, at least, his own officers had determined,—to abide the issue of a contest. Meanwhile on either side secret emissaries were employed to tamper with the adherents of the opposite party. Valens tried to shake the devotion of the prætorians to Otho, by representing his own emperor as the first proclaimed, and their chief as a mere intruder: but these attempts had no success either in Rome or in Gaul; men's minds were everywhere prepared for battle, and would not be disappointed of the slaughter, and the spoil or confiscation which might be expected to follow.

The legions and provinces range themselves on one side or the other.

During the advance of the invaders from the North, the news of Otho's accession had flown fast into the East, and even in the West it had outstripped the heralds of Vitellius. The troops in Illyricum were the first, as they were the nearest, to accept the appointment of Otho, and this accession of force gave him considerable confidence. Mucianus from Syria, Vespasian from Palestine, announced the adhesion of their legions to the choice of the capital; the oath of fidelity was repeated without dissent along the whole coast of Africa, Crescens, a freedman of Nero, leading the way at Carthage, and presuming to anticipate the proconsul's decision. Cluvius Rufus, who commanded in one of the provinces of Spain, reported that the troops throughout the peninsula would prove faithful to the murderer of Galba; but suddenly it was found that they had declared for Vitellius. Julius Cordus administered the oath in Aquitania; but here again the emissaries of Vitellius succeeded in bringing the soldiers over to their own side. The Narbonensis naturally embraced the Gaulish faction, overawed by the proximity of its formidable armies. Thus the legions throughout the whole Roman world

stood to arms; the civil functionaries, the citizens, the provincials, and lastly the allies and tributaries followed the impulse of the soldiery, and were prepared, by force of habit, if not from personal inclination, to yield them the support they required. This universal movement of civil strife was primarily a military one; but in every quarter the people were ranged, as far as they could render service, on the side chosen by their presidiary troops. In fact the population generally throughout the empire, disarmed, unwarlike, and accustomed to look on the armed soldier as the appointed arbiter of its destinies, had now lost whatever independence of choice or power of action it may once have claimed to exercise in questions of imperial policy.[1]

It was among the first cares of Otho's government, so to order the succession of consuls for the year as to secure him friends without increasing the number of his enemies. The death of Galba and Vinius left both chairs vacant, and so, in the confusion of the times, they seem to have remained to the end of February. To maintain the dignity of the imperial office, as well as to give to it, as it were, the sanction of the senate, Otho named himself and his brother Titianus consuls for March and April; Virginius was appointed to succeed in May, a compliment to the Gaulish legions which Galba had jealously withheld, with Vopiscus, who was connected with the colony of Vienna, for his colleague. The other consulships for the year, two months being often at this period a common term of office for each pair, were confirmed to the personages whom Galba, or even Nero before him, had already designated. Priesthoods and augurships were bestowed on veteran dignitaries, who had passed the age for more laborious occupations, and the chil-

Measures of Otho's government.

[1] Tac *Hist.* i. 76—78.

dren of deceased exiles were compensated for their sufferings by the restoration of honours forfeited by their fathers. Many representatives of noble houses were thus readmitted to the senate, and some who had been punished under Nero for malversation in their provinces were pardoned, as though they too had been innocent victims of an indiscriminate tyranny. Such were the new emperor's measures for conciliating the nobles. At the same time he issued edicts in rapid succession for the gratification of the provincials, whose fidelity it seemed most important to secure, among whom were the people of Bætica in Spain, and the Lingones in Gaul. The rumour that he contemplated celebrating Nero's memory as a boon to the populace at Rome was probably an invention of his enemies.[1]

Otho's soldiers suspect the senators of treachery.

We may believe, however, that great jealousy of the senate pervaded both the populace and the soldiers. The senators were reputed Galba's friends: they had chosen him of their own free will; but Otho they had only accepted. The soldiers had created the present emperor, and they were ready to believe that the senators were intriguing against him. A cohort stationed at Ostia happened to be summoned to the city; its equipments were to be conveyed in waggons for distribution to the men in their new quarters; but this was done by chance at night, and in an unusual way; and suddenly the men took alarm, conceived a notion that their arms were to be taken from them to furnish a band of senatorian conspirators, and, seizing horses, rushed tumultuously to Rome, and penetrated to the gates of the palace. Otho at the moment was entertaining a party of nobles: the soldiers stormed at the gates, without a leader, without a banner, exclaiming that they were come to protect their emperor

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 77, 78.; Plutarch, *Otho*, 3.

from the designs of his treacherous parasites. The guests were in consternation; the first impulse on their part was to apprehend treachery from their host. When he desired them to withdraw, they made their way as they best could to their homes; scarcely had they quitted the chamber before the doors were burst in, and the furious mob demanded Otho to be presented to them. Some officers they wounded, others they threatened, till the emperor himself leaped upon a couch, and from thence, regardless of the military indecorum, expostulated and reasoned with his manipulars. With great difficulty they were persuaded to return to their quarters. The next day the alarm had penetrated through the whole city; houses were shut, the streets were deserted; the people were in dismay, the soldiers anxious and uneasy. The prefects finally composed the disturbance by promising a largess of five thousand sesterces to each of the mutineers; after which Otho ventured to enter their quarters, and with the support of their officers, demanded two only of the most violent for punishment. The current of feeling, already checked by the promised donative, was completely turned by this show of moderation, and the soldiers congratulated themselves on the magnanimity of their leader, who could thus temper justice with mercy.[1]

Uneasiness of the popular mind at Rome.

The spirits of Otho himself were roused by the perils of the crisis, and he displayed activity, vigour, readiness, and decision, which no doubt amazed the men who had known him hitherto only as a showy profligate. But all

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 80—82.; Plutarch, *Otho*, 3.; Dion, lxiv. 9. That the senate was really hostile to Otho there can be no doubt. It was both alarmed and mortified by the way in which, while pretending to rely on its authority, he coquetted with the soldiers and the populace.

It is well known that few, if any, genuine specimens of a brass (senatorial) coinage of this emperor exist; and this has been supposed to indicate that that body, in its ill will to him, refused to stamp his

other classes were paralysed with alarm. The senators, made thus rudely sensible of the soldiers' feelings towards them, became more servile to the emperor, more profuse in their adulation, more vehement in denouncing his enemy; yet all the while they knew that Otho, so lately one of themselves, was not deceived by this show of devotion, and apprehended that he was storing up an account of vengeance, whenever he should be free to direct against them the fury of the soldiers which he was now nursing against the adversary in the field.[1] The people were disturbed by a thousand terrors, real and imaginary. They heard that Vitellians were among them, intriguing with both the citizens and the soldiers; they distrusted every report, whether of successes or disasters; they were scared by the rumour of prodigies, the dropping of the reins from the hands of a marble Victory, the turning of Cæsar's statue from west to east; and finally, a terrible inundation of the Tiber seemed an omen of worse disasters. When the force of the waves, which had undermined many houses, was abated, they still kept possession of the Campus and the Flaminian Way; and it was remarked as an evil augury that when Otho first led his cohorts out of the city, he was impeded in his march northward by the waters themselves, or by the ruins they had created.[2]

name and countenance. Eckhel, after refuting this and other explanations of the fact, acknowledges that he can offer no probable solution of it. It is allowed, however, that there are a great number of brass Galbas extant; and I would suggest, that as the senate, perhaps in the excess of its zeal for the destroyer of Nero, made a large issue of this coinage, there would be little opportunity for a fresh mintage during the few months of Otho's power. It may be observed, moreover, that the Vitellian brasses also are comparatively rare. See Eckhel, *Doct. Numm.* vi. 305.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 85.: "Et privato Othoni nuper, atque eadem dicenti, nota adulatio."

[2] Tac. *Hist.* i. 86.; Plut. *Otho*, 4.

While the Priests and Flamens, the Salii and the Vestals, with the mighty mob of Rome in their train, conducted a lustral procession round the pomœrium, the emperor was meditating the plan of his campaign, with the view of turning the flank of the invaders already hovering on the Alps. The naval force at Ostia was warmly attached to him, for he had caressed the remnant of Nero's marines after the chastisement they had suffered from Galba, constituting them a regular corps for the land service, which was reputed more honourable than their own. The men now to be employed on board ship might hope for similar advancement; for it was Otho's plan to equip an armament first for the recovery of the Narbonensis, and eventually for operations in the rear of the Vitellian expedition.[1] Some city cohorts and some battalions of the guard were added to the marine force; on the latter especial reliance was placed, and their officers were employed to watch the emperor's generals not less than to assist them. Nohing indeed showed more clearly the precariousness of Otho's position than the precautions he was obliged to take against the very men whom he charged with his defence. Though he enjoyed the services of Suetonius, the greatest captain of the times, together with other men of vigour and conduct, he deemed it necessary to set Proculus, the prætorian prefect, a mere policeman without military experience, as a spy over them, with instructions to foment their jealousies and secure their fidelity to himself by divisions among one another. Finally, a freedman, named Oscus, seems to have been set as a spy over Proculus.[2]

Otho's distrust of his own officers.

[1] The expression of Tacitus, "spe honoratioris in posterum militiæ," is the same as that of Livy, xxxii. 23.; from which it appears that the legionary service was considered of a higher grade than the marine.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* i. 87.

But Otho was too active and high-spirited himself to trust entirely to his marines or his soldiers, to his generals or his freedmen. He led his land forces in person, and required the magistrates and the consulars to attend him, not as combatants, for which many of them by age and habit were unfit, but as companions, in order to secure their persons and remove them from the city. Otho indeed was studiously mild in the treatment even of those whose intrigues he had most reason to apprehend. He was satisfied with commanding Lucius, a brother of Aulus Vitellius, to accompany him to the field, treating him with the same courtesy as others. It is pleasant also to read, as an unusual feature in civil war, that he extended his protection to his opponent's children, who were left in the city, and whom their father had no means of protecting but by a threat of reprisals on Titianus, Otho's brother, for Otho himself was wifeless and childless. But, surrounded as he was by a gay and unwarlike nobility, vain of the softness of their manners, of their beauty, their dress, and their equipments, the emperor himself, long known as a mere dissolute fop, suddenly threw off the habits of his past life, and embraced without a murmur all the austerities of service; clad in steel, unwashed, uncombed, he marched on foot at the head of his columns, as if to belie beforehand the sarcasm of the satirist, that he waged a civil war with a mirror in his knapsack.[1] His forces indeed were slender, consisting chiefly of the prætorians and marines, and his preparations had probably been retarded by want of money, while the population suffered from the seizure of all the specie that could be collected, and it was now too late to occupy the passes

Otho marches at the head of his troops.

[1] Contrast the description in Tacitus, *Hist.* ii. 11.: "Horridus, incomptus, famæque dissimilis," with the well-known sarcasm of Juvenal, ii. 103.:

"Speculum civilis sarcina belli."

of the Alps and confine the Vitellians to the Gaulish provinces. Cæcina had entered the Cisalpine, and Valens was hastening to join him; but Otho's fleet had thrown garrisons into the strong places along the coast-road, and four legions were advancing with rapid strides from Illyricum, to turn the head of the Adriatic. Five cohorts of prætorians, some squadrons of cavalry, and a body of two thousand gladiators, were sent forward to seize the fords and bridges of the Po; and the Othonians hoped to choose their own positions in the plains on which the enemy was to be met, and the empire to be lost or won.[1]

Operations of Otho's fleet on the Ligurian coast.

While the main forces on both sides were converging from many quarters to the centre of the Padane valley, the skirmishes which occurred elsewhere were of little real importance. Otho's fleet, after provoking by wanton plunder the natives of the Ligurian coast, began to harass the shores of Gaul, and Valens was induced by the cries of the Foro-julians to detach some cohorts for their protection. Troops were landed from the vessels, and various actions took place with no serious result. Corsica was easily persuaded to side with the masters of the sea; but its governor was at private feud with Otho, and tried to secure it for Vitellius. His efforts were nearly crowned with success, but the people rose at last against him, put him to death, and sent his head, in token of their fidelity, to Otho, who, however, was too much occupied with greater matters to reward or acknowledge it.[2]

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 12—15. After the event it was objected that Otho had set out too precipitately: "expeditionem impigre atque etiam præpropere inchoavit." Suet. *Otho,* 8. Evil auspices of course were recorded, and it was particularly remarked that he had neglected to make the solemn display of the Ancilia, without which no military enterprise had ever succeeded. The month of March was appointed for this ceremony, after which, accordingly, the military season commenced. See the commentators on Suetonius. Otho set out on the day of Cybele, the 24th of March (ix. kal. April.).

[2] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 16.; *Agric.* 7.

The Othonians establish themselves at Placentia, and cross the Po to Bedriacum.

By the time that Otho's forces arrived on the southern bank of the Po, the Transpadane region westward of the Addua, the most flourishing district of Italy as it was regarded in the time of Tacitus, had fallen into the hands of the Vitellians. A few flying squadrons of Othonians, which had crossed the river, had been cut off by the invaders.[1] The Vitellians were elated with this success, and their Batavian horse dashed into the stream, and secured an easy passage for Cæcina's foremost columns. Placentia, a place of strength, was held for Otho by Vestricius Spurinna. At first he was unable to restrain the impetuosity of his men, who rushed of their own accord to meet the enemy; but the labour of digging the trenches for their encampment at night damped the ardour of this indolent police, and as Cæcina advanced they retreated hastily behind their walls. The Vitellians, on their part, disdained to form a regular siege; the contempt in which the veterans held Otho's marines and gladiators, urged them to rush to the assault. In the course of this attack the amphitheatre outside the city, the largest building of the kind in Italy, but constructed apparently of wood, was consumed by fire, which the Placentians ascribed to the spite of some of their own neighbours. However this may be, the assault was unsuccessful, and Cæcina was obliged to withdraw beyond the Po, to await the arrival of Valens, who was retarded by insubordination in his camp, and by the necessity of detaching a part of his forces for the defence of the Narbonensis. The Othonians meanwhile collected in greater strength, and, having crossed the river at a lower point, established themselves at Bedriacum, at the junction of the Oglio and the Chiese, commanding the road from Cremona to Verona on the one

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 17.: "Capta Pannoniorum cohors apud Cremonam. Intercepti centum equites ac mille classici inter Placentiam Ticinumque."

side, and Mantua on the other. The temper of the troops about to be opposed to each other differed considerably. On the Vitellian side the two leaders were thoroughly earnest in their enterprise: they were engaged in a revolt beyond hope of pardon, and success was necessary for them: but their forces could much less be relied on, formed as they were by the union of many nations under one banner, with no personal interest in their chiefs or their party, and little else to animate them but the natural ferocity of trained swordsmen, and the lust of plunder. It was difficult to maintain their discipline, and every day relaxed the bands of their obedience. Otho's soldiers, on the other hand, were inspired by very different motives. The prætorians had to defend an emperor of their own choice; to maintain their sudden claim to bestow the purple; to retain their precriptive right to favours and largesses; to acquire a reputation in the field, and throw off the degrading name of a mere police. The gladiators were emulous of the fame of the legionaries: the legionaries of Illyricum thirsted to measure swords with the conquerors of Germany and Britain. But, ardent as they were for the fight, their want of discipline and mutual confidence caused great disquietude to the old soldiers their commanders. Suetonius was dismayed at the rawness of the levies he was expected to lead to victory, and urged delay.[1] His colleagues, however, Marius Celsus, Proculus, and Gallus, shrewd competitors for Otho's favour, were jealous of him and of one another. The emperor could only settle their disputes by calling Titianus from the city, and placing him over them all; and thus assured of at

[1] Besides the chief in command, there was another Suetonius in the Othonian army, tribune of the Thirteenth legion. This was Suetonius Lenis, the father of the biographer of the Cæsars, who has himself recorded the fact, adding that he derived from him some interesting particulars of the emperor's last hours. Suet. *Otho*, 10.

least one faithful officer, and wearied with the discord of those around him, he impatiently waived all cautious counsels, and gave the signal for attack.[1]

Battle of Bedriacum.

It is no reflection on Otho's courage that he abstained from leading his own armies. He was conscious that he had no military experience, yet the imperator of the legions could not yield the place of general to a lieutenant in the field. He retired to Brixellum, on the right bank of the Po, to receive the fresh troops which were rapidly arriving, and organize them for the campaign; but he left his legates to fight the battle which he hoped would decide it at a blow. This division, however, of forces, which were not too numerous to be kept together in one body, still more this retirement of the chief himself from the head of his own army, seems to have been fatal to the cause. The men were disturbed and discouraged, and the movements of their leaders became more than ever vacillating and uncertain. Against the advice of Suetonius, Proculus and Titianus insisted on advancing from Bedriacum; they fixed their camp at the fourth milestone on the road to Cremona, but pleading the urgent commands of Otho himself, they marched sixteen miles further, to the confluence of the Po and the Addua. Their object seems to have been to interrupt the operations of Cæcina, who was throwing a bridge across the Po, with the intention, apparently, of outflanking them, and attacking Otho at Brixellum. A parley took place between him and some of their officers: it was interrupted by an order from Valens to attack; the Vitellians issuing from their camp were severely handled; again they recovered themselves, and the Othonians in their turn suffered from the indecision or the treachery of their leaders. On a false report that the Vitellians had abandoned their

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 33.

emperor, they grounded arms, and saluted them as friends: undeceived by a fiercer onset, they defended themselves with desperation, but with little order, here and there, in the groves and vineyards, by groups or maniples. Those who retained their footing on the causeway kept more solid array; here there was no distant fighting with arrows or javelins; even the pilum was thrown aside, and the opposing bands, rushing furiously together, thrust with the shield, and smote with the sword, till the ground was gained or lost by sheer strength of arm and courage. The vicissitudes of the fray were rapid, various, and indecisive. While numbers remained equal, valour and strength were equally balanced. But suddenly Otho's generals lost heart and fled. At the same moment the Vitellians were supplied with reinforcements; they charged with redoubled vigour, and broke the ranks of their disconcerted opponents. The smooth straight road tempted the worsted battalions to flight, and, hotly pressed and cut up as they fled,—for none cared to capture men who could not be sold as slaves,—they hurried without a rally towards Bedriacum. Suetonius and Proculus had already passed straight through the lines, nor halted to attempt their defence. Titianus and Celsus exerted themselves with more spirit to stop the fugitives, and rallied a handful of men under the shelter of the entrenchments, which they closed and guarded through the night. The Vitellians drew up at the fifth milestone, that is, when they came in sight of the Othonian camp, which they were not furnished with engines to assault: they lay down to rest on the spot, without pausing to fortify themselves; and the Othonians were too weary or too terrified to molest them. The next morning the beaten army treated for a capitulation; their envoys were favourably received, and the gates were immediately opened. The soldiers fell sobbing into one another's

Defeat of the Othonians.

arms; friends and brothers tended each other's wounds All denounced in common the wickedness of civil war; some even returned to the field to bury the bodies of their fallen kinsmen; but the feelings of religion or humanity extended to a few only, and the greater number of the dead long lay uncared for.[1]

Otho declines to continue the contest, and commits suicide.

Otho awaited the result of the battle at Brixellum, with a mind equally composed to good or evil tidings. The first uncertain rumours of defeat were confirmed by the fugitives from the field, and great as the disaster was, it may be supposed that they rather enhanced than extenuated it. Nevertheless the legions which had not been engaged were not dismayed at the occurrence. Without waiting for the emperor's exhortation, they thronged of their own accord around him, and urged him to prove their valour in the recovery of his fortunes. Plotius Firmus, the prefect of the prætorians, seconded their clamorous importunities. He showed how strong the resources of their party still were, and pointed to the legions which were even now advancing to join them, which had already announced their arrival at Aquileia, and declared the courage which animated them. A common soldier drew his sword in the emperor's presence, and exclaiming, *This is the devotion which animates us all,* plunged it into his own bosom.[2] It is clear that Otho was possessed of ample means for continuing the contest. But he had determined otherwise. His life had been a feverish pursuit, first of pleasure, and afterwards of power. Under the influence of a vivid imagination guided by vulgar delusions, not by per-

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 41—45. Plutarch, who seems to have followed Tacitus, or at least to have used the same authorities, remarks on the great number of the slain, because none were interested in making prisoners. He had himself traversed the battle-field, and been told by one who had shared the fortunes of the beaten army, of the lofty pile of corpses which was raised upon it. Plut. *Otho,* 14.

[2] Dion, lxiv. 11.; Plut. *Otho,* 15.; Suet. *Otho,* 10.

sonal judgment or experience, he had aspired to the heights of human happiness, first in the arms of gorgeous beauty, and again in the purple robe of imperial sovereignty. He had waked from both his dreams almost at the moment when he seemed to realize them; and these visions, as they flitted away from him, left him sobered but not embittered, disenchanted but not cynical. The world, he was now convinced, was not worth the fighting for: success and victory, fame and honour, were not worth the fighting for: his own life was not worth the fighting for. The sentiment of the noble voluptuary, that they who have enjoyed life the most are often the most ready to quit it, whatever we may think of its justice in general, was never more conspicuously fulfilled than in this example.[1] It is pleasant to believe that the last thoughts of this misguided spirit were for the peace of his country and the safety of his friends, to whom he counselled submission. After refusing to allow a renewal of the contest, after providing as he best could for the bloodless recognition of the emperor whom fortune had designated, congratulating himself that he had set an example of clemency, in sparing the family of Vitellius, which the victor for very shame must follow, Otho laid himself calmly on his couch. A tumult arising outside his tent, in which Virginius was threatened with violence, together with others of the senators, who at their master's bidding were leaving the camp, he rose, and with a few words rebuked and allayed the wrath of his fanatical adherents. As evening closed he called for a cup of water, and for two daggers, of which he chose the sharpest, and laid it under his

[1] Byron's *Mazeppa*:

"And strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
They who have revelled beyond measure
In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
Die calm, and calmer oft than he
Whose heritage was misery."

pillow. At the same time he ordered his attendant to quit the place, and show himself to the soldiers, lest he should be charged, in their intemperate fury, with the deed he was about himself to perpetrate. Assured at last that his friends had got beyond the lines, he lay down, and slept for some hours. At break of day he drew forth his weapon, placed it to his heart, and threw his weight upon it. Nature demanded one groan. The slaves and freedmen in the outer chambers rushed trembling to his side, and with them the prefect Plotius. Otho lay dead with a single wound. He had made one request only, that his body might be consumed immediately, to escape the indignity of exposure and decollation. The prætorians crowded, with shouts and tears, to support the bier, kissing the gaping wound and the hanging hands. The pyre was heaped, the noble remains laid upon it, and when the flames were kindled some of the soldiers slew themselves on the spot. This barbarous example kindled the emulation of the legionaries, and at Bedriacum, at Placentia, and in other camps, it found many desperate imitators. Finally, a modest monument was raised over the emperor's ashes, such as the conqueror himself would scarcely grudge to an honourable opponent.[1]

The empire offered again to Virginius, and refused by him.

Then once again was the empire offered by the soldiers to Virginius, and again did the veteran refuse it. Neither would he undertake, as they next requested him, to confer with Valens and Cæcina on the terms of an arrangement that might satisfy both parties. He

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 47—50.; Plut. *Otho*, 15—18.; Suet. *Otho*, 10—12.; Dion, lxiv. 11—15. Otho wanted eleven days to complete his 37th year; his reign had lasted ninety-five days: born 28th April, 785, he died 17th April, 822. See Baumgarten-Crusius on Suetonius, c. 11., who explains the apparent error of his author: "tricesimo et octavo ætatis anno." Martial expresses the common sentiment of admiration for this Roman end, vi. 32.:

"Sic Cato dum vixit, sane vel Cæsare major:
Dum moritur, numquid major Othone fuit?"

judged the cause of Otho and his friends as hopeless as it was unjust, and he would not consent to act in its behalf. They drew their swords, but he was firm in his refusal, and at last only escaped at the back of his tent from their fury. Thus baffled, the troops at Brixellum promised their unconditional submission to the victorious generals, while Flavius Sabinus, the brother of Vespasian, whom Otho had distinguished with high marks of favour, sent the cohorts he commanded to the camp of the Vitellians.[1] Of the senators whom Otho had carried to the seat of war his soldiers were not less jealous than himself, and after the rout of Bedriacum, the troops which attended or guarded them at Mutina, not crediting the account of their chief's disasters, watched them with redoubled vigilance, and at last, when the news was confirmed, scarcely refrained from wreaking their spite upon them. Nor did these unfortunate nobles run much less risk at the hands of the Vitellians, who believed that they had cheered the resistance, and delayed the surrender of their opponents; and this risk was heightened by the inprudence of the decurions of the town, in still offering arms and money, and styling them Conscript Fathers: still more by the daring fiction of a freedman of Nero named Cœnus, who at the last moment spread the report of a fresh victory over the invaders.

The senate accepts Vitellius as emperor with acclamation.

At Rome in the meantime there was no hesitation, no conflict of opinion. The games of Ceres were being performed in the theatre, and the populace was intent only on the amusement of the hour, when it was announced that Otho was dead, and the prefect Sabinus had required the soldiers in the city to swear to Vitellius. The name of the new emperor was received at once with acclamations, and the people, streaming forth,

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 51.

seized the images of Galba, and bore them crowned with flowers and laurels to the temples, and to the spot where his blood had fallen, which they heaped with chaplets. Such of the senators as were still at home met immediately, and decreed to Vitellius by a single act all the honours and titles which had been dealt out from year to year to his predecessors. Thanks were voted to the Germanic legions. Valens was praised for his despatches, which affected moderation and respect, but the senators were really more grateful to Cæcina, who had proved his respect by not addressing them at all. Having thus done all in their power to conciliate their new master, they still awaited his arrival with anxiety; for amply as they had satisfied his desires, it might not be in his power to control his terrible soldiery, and visions of plunder, of confiscation or massacre, rose before the eyes of a generation to which the civil wars of Rome were matter of history. The fate which Rome might fear at a distance alighted actually on many districts of Italy; for the fierce warriors of the north, Romans only in name, who had scented their quarry from the Rhine, now fell without remorse on the burgs and colonies. Valens and Cæcina were too criminal, or too ambitious themselves to check this brutal licentiousness. The soldiers of Otho, it was said, had exhausted Italy; but it was desolated by the ruffians of Vitellius.[1]

The Italian cities plundered by Vitellius.

Meanwhile Vitellius had been collecting his troops in Gaul, or advancing leisurely in the rear of his legates, indulging at this crisis of his affairs the natural indolence of his disposition, sluggish and indifferent, without pride or ambition, with no thought beyond the morrow, yet all the more subject to be worked on by cool intriguers and led into sudden excesses of cruelty or

Vitellius advances through Gaul into Italy.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 55, 56.

violence. He carried with him eight thousand of the levies which had been destined to reinforce the army in Britain, besides the strength of the Gallic and Germanic legions. Scarcely had he put himself in motion, when the news of the victory at Bedriacum and the death of Otho reached him. At the same time the accession of the Mauretanian provinces was announced, an increase of military strength amounting to nineteen cohorts and five squadrons of horse, together with a numerous corps of native auxiliaries. About the events by which this advantage accrued to him, the rising of the prætor Albinus for his rival, the frustration of this man's attempt on Spain, his flight and slaughter, Vitellius made no inquiry: he was too thoughtless to pay attention to the details of his affairs. He descended the gentle current of the Saône in a barge, while his troops marched along the bank; though secure of his conquest, he did not all at once assume the pomp of sovereignty. He had quitted Rome a bankrupt; and he was returning poor and squalid as he came; till Junius Blæsus, the prefect of the Lugdunensis, a man of wealth and magnificence, invested him with the ensigns of empire. Vitellius seems to have felt this officious zeal as a slur on his own torpidity, and resented rather than approved it. At Lugdunum he was met by Valens and Cæcina, together with the chiefs of the conquered party. Now at last he awoke, and understood that he was actually emperor. From his tribunal he distributed thanks and praises, and commanded the army to salute his infant son as heir to the purple. He associated the child in his own title of Germanicus.[1] Some cruel executions followed,

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 59. It must be remarked, however, that Galeria, the wife of Vitellius, had been left behind at Rome with her children, while another son by a former wife, Petronia, named Petronianus, was grown up at this time, if still alive. Suetonius, indeed, says that Vitellius had murdered him (*Vitell.* 6.): but whether this be true or not, there seems to be some mistake in the statement of Tacitus.

and the Illyrian legions, which had ranged themselves on the side of Otho, were exasperated by the slaughter of more than one of their officers. The dissensions between the various corps grew daily wider. Suetonius and Proculus sought to secure the conqueror's regard by alleging their own treachery to Otho, which he affected to believe, and after some delay and contumelious treatment pretended to receive them into favour. Titianus was pardoned, ostensibly from respect for his fraternal affection; at all events he deserved well for his forbearance towards Galeria and her children. Marius Celsus was suffered to retain the consulship. The vengeance of Vitellius, by whatever motives it was influenced, fell generally upon lesser victims.[1]

Vitellius generally indulgent towards his enemies.

Feelings, indeed, of sympathy for human suffering, or respect for human life, were as alien from Vitellius as from his class generally. On the removal of so large a portion of the Roman garrisons, a Gaul, named Maricus, raised a revolt among his countrymen. He pretended to be a god, immortal and invulnerable. But he was captured and given up by the Ædui, and ruthlessly cast forth to be devoured in the arena. When by some chance the beasts refused to touch him, and his trembling votaries were almost reassured, Vitellius looked on coolly while a gladiator despatched him. But he was too careless, it would appear, to grasp at money, and for money the massacres of the civil wars had generally been perpetrated. Vitellius not only spared his enemies' lives, but allowed the wills of

[1] Suetonius assures us (c. 10.) that Vitellius put to death a hundred and twenty persons who were found, from papers discovered in Otho's hands, to have claimed a reward for the slaughter of Galba. The most distinguished victim of this revolution was a Dolabella, who was charged with attempting to revive Otho's faction in his own behalf. He was slain, under atrocious circumstances, at Interamnium. See Tac. *Hist.* ii. 63, 64.

such as had fallen in the field to take effect for the benefit of their relations. His interests seemed to centre in the gratification of an inordinate gluttony, and as he marched slowly along, all Italy, from sea to sea, was swept for delicacies for his table. If he did not confiscate his enemies' estates to lavish them on his followers, he allowed his followers to indemnify themselves by plundering enemies or friends. Even after the harvests reaped by two preceding armies, enough, it seems, remained to satisfy a third, to generate a complete relaxation of discipline, and impress the soldier with avowed contempt for his imperator. The edicts Vitellius sent before him were sufficiently moderate. He waived for the present the title of Augustus, and positively refused that of Cæsar. He ordered the diviners, the favourites and accomplices of Otho and Nero, to be expelled from Italy, and forbade the knights to disgrace their order by descending on the arena, a practice which had spread from Rome itself even to towns in the country.[1] The conduct of Galeria the wife, and Sextilia the mother, of the new emperor, might help to reassure the minds of the better class. Both these matrons were examples of moderation in prosperity. Sextilia looked with distrust on her son's extraordinary advancement, refusing all public honours herself, and replying to the letter in which he first addressed her by his new appellation, that she had borne a Vitellius, and not a Germanicus. But this high-minded woman died shortly after, and some insinuated that her son had starved her to death, because it had been predicted

Gluttony his prevailing passion.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 62. The mathematici were ordered to quit Italy by the kalends of October. They revenged themselves by posting a placard, in which they intimated that Vitellius himself should quit the world ("ne usquam esset") before that day. Suet. *Vitell.* 15. Vitellius, however, did not die till the end of December. Dion (lxv. 1.) declares that the exact day was predicted, but prudently abstains from citing the date fixed by the decree.

that he would reign long if he survived his parent: others that he had given her poison at her own request, through dread of impending reverses.[1] Such are the kind of stories, improbable and inconsistent with one another, of which much of our history, if it be written at all, must now consist.

Discharge of the prætorians, and disposal of the Othonian legions

But already Vitellius, or at least his shrewder advisers, began to feel the perils of his position, tossed as he was on the waves of so many conflicting tides of military insurrection. The Illyrian legions he had already mortified; but he could not suffer the prætorians to retain their usurped authority, and it was necessary to disband them.[2] The Fourteenth legion which had fought for Otho at Bedriacum, and refused to admit that it had been worsted, was burning to avenge the disgrace incurred from the event of a few trifling skirmishes. This division had been recalled from Britain by Nero, and thither it was now ordered to return. The First legion of marines was drafted into Spain. The Eleventh and Seventh were sent at the commencement of summer into winter quarters. The Thirteenth was employed in the erection of amphitheatres at Cremona and Bononia, where Cæcina and Valens proposed to amuse the soldiers with gladiatorial shows.

[1] Suet. *Vitell.* 14. As we come near to the time of Suetonius, the retailer of these and similar rumours, the domestic history of the Cæsars becomes less trustworthy than ever. He could now only relate the anecdotes of the day, not yet sifted and sanctioned by any standard authority. The death of Sextilia is mentioned by Tacitus without intimating that any suspicion attached to it. See *Hist.* iii. 67.: "Erat illi fessa ætate parens, quæ tamen, paucis ante diebus, opportuna morte excidium domus prævenit, nihil principatu filii adsecuta nisi luctum et bonam famam." Comp. *Hist.* ii. 64.: "Sextilia . . . . antiqui moris . . . . domus suæ tantum adversa sensit."

[2] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 67.: "Addito honestæ missionis lenimento arma ad tribunos suos deferebant." The historian adds that at the next outbreak of civil war these reckless soldiers, who it may be supposed had continued to linger in the city, offered their services to the opponent of Vitellius.

The advance of Vitellius still continued to be marked by excesses and horrors of various kinds. At Ticinum, the disruption of the bands of discipline was more than ever apparent. The emperor lay down to supper with Virginius by his side. The legates and tribunes thronged to his orgies. Outside the imperial tent, centurions and soldiers emulated the dissipation of their chief. Drunkenness and disorder reigned throughout the night. A Gaul and a Roman happened to challenge one another to wrestle; the legionary fell, the auxiliary mocked him; his comrades flew to arms, and two auxiliary cohorts were cut to pieces. Battle would have raged throughout the lines, but for a seasonable alarm. The return of the Fourteenth legion was announced, with swords drawn, and standards advanced, and an attack on the camp was apprehended by the intoxicated mob within it. The alarm was false; but, while it lasted, a slave of Virginius was seized, and charged with the purpose of killing the emperor. The death of Virginius was now loudly demanded by the soldiers around the tent. Vitellius, indeed, had the firmness to refuse them; he could not afford to sacrifice so brave and honest a friend. This was the third escape of Virginius, and the great age he eventually attained in peace and honour, made the risks of his early years the more worthy of remark.[1]

Military disturbance at Ticinum.

Narrow escape of Virginius.

From Ticinum Vitellius proceeded to Cremona, and there witnessed the contests of Cæcina's gladiators. Thence he diverged from his route to cross the plain of Bedriacum, and beheld the scene of his victory, still reeking with the

Brutality of Vitellius on the field of Bedriacum.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 68. Virginius survived to his 83rd year, A.D. 97. The younger Pliny records the lines which he directed to be engraved on his tomb, *Ep.* vi. 10., ix. 19.:

"Hic situs est Rufus, pulso qui Vindice quondam
Imperium asseruit non sibi, sed patriæ."

fumes of human slaughter. The curiosity with which he examined the spot and listened to the details of the bloody fray, shocked the narrators of his history: he showed no remorse for the death of so many of his countrymen, nor horror at the sight of their remains. Some, indeed, declared that he expressed a brutal pleasure at the scene: *The corpse of an enemy* he said, *smells always well, particularly of a citizen.* Nevertheless, he fortified his stomach with draughts of wine, and distributed it largely among his soldiers. Tacitus himself, the most temperate or least fanciful of our authorities, allows that he sacrificed on the field to the *Divinities of the spot.*[1]

He is with difficulty withheld from entering Rome as an armed conqueror.

The shows of Valens at Bononia were celebrated with unusual pomp, the whole apparatus of imperial luxury being brought for the purpose from Rome, and with it the worthless instruments of Nero's debaucheries, the dancers, ingers, and eunuchs, with whom Vitellius had become familiar in the court of the tyrant. As he approached the city the stream of application for places and favours met him with accumulated force; it was necessary to abridge the short tenure of the designated consuls to make room for more competitors, and some, who might be expected to put up with an affront, were excluded altogether. The news which now arrived of the adhesion of the Syrian legions dispelled all alarm, and gave the rein to every evil passion. The emperor and the army, with no fear of Vespasian before them, might indulge themselves without restraint. Vitellius would have entered Rome in the garb of war, cloaked and booted,

They seem to contradict the statement of the historian, that Virginius and Vindex had come to a mutual understanding. This was the tradition to which Juvenal also refers:

"Quid enim Virginius armis
Debuit ulcisci magis, aut cum Vindice Galba."

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 70. Comp. Suet. *Vitell.* 10.; Dion, lxv. 1.

at the head of his troops, with colours flying and trumpets blowing. Such arrogance would have been unparalleled:[1] such flagitiousness would have been a prodigy. Citizens of every rank stood aghast at this vision of foreign invasion descried dimly in the distance; but the emperor's friends interposed at the last moment, and at the Milvian bridge he consented to lay down his military ensigns, and traversed the streets in the civil prætexta, the soldiers following with sheathed swords.

[1] Comp. Tac. *Hist.* ii. 89. with Suet. *Vitell.* 11. The account of the former is undoubtedly to be preferred.

CHAPTER LVII.

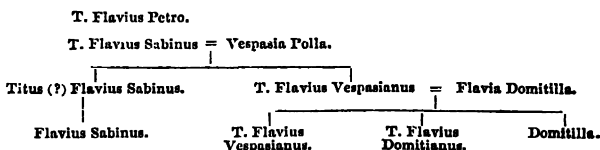
Origin and early history of Vespasian.—He is recommended to the Syrian legions by Mucianus, and proclaimed emperor in the East. — Mucianus advances towards Italy, while Vespasian occupies Egypt.—Disgraceful conduct of Vitellius at Rome.—He is abandoned or feebly supported by his partisans.—His forces defeated at Bedriacum.—Antonius Primus crosses the Apennines.—Vitellius offers to resign the empire, but is prevented by his soldiers.—The Capitol attacked by the Vitellians and burnt.—Primus forces his way into Rome.—Vitellius seized and slain.—Vespasian accepted as emperor.—Mucianus conducts the government during his absence.—State of affairs at Rome.—Commencement of the restoration of the Capitol.—Superstitious reverence paid to the Flavian family.—Pretended miracles of Vespasian at Alexandria. —He reaches Rome. (A.D. 69, 70. A.U. 822, 823.)

Origin and career of Vespasian.

TITUS FLAVIUS VESPASIANUS, whose career we are now to follow, has already been mentioned as an object of jealousy to Otho, and again to Vitellius; as the man, however, whose rumoured adhesion to the latest revolution seemed to establish the usurpation of the adventurer from Germany. The origin of this redoubted soldier was obscure: his family belonged to the Sabine burgh of Reate, and had never risen to public honours. Vespasian had no illustrious images in the modest hall of his fathers. Arrived, at the period now before us, at the advanced age of sixty, he had passed the most active portion of life in a variety of important services.[1] The favour of Narcissus had given him a

[1] Vespasian was born at Phalacrine, a village near Reate; but his grandfather, the first mentioned of the family, was a citizen of the larger town. Suet. *Vespas.* i. 2. His grandfather was named T. Flavius Petro:—

legion in Britain, where, as we have seen, he had performed some notable exploits, and earned the triumphal ornaments. This acknowledgment of his merits was followed, still perhaps through the patronage of the powerful freedman, by two priesthoods and the consulship in the year 804. In the prime of life, and at the height of honour, he had been reduced to inaction by the jealousy of Agrippina, who hated all the dependents of Narcissus; and it was not till her fall that he succeeded to the proconsulship of Africa, which he exercised in 816. The administration of Vespasian had the rare merit of bringing him no pecuniary advantage. He left the province poorer than he came to it; but he confirmed the opinion of his prudence and firmness, while he acquired a character for integrity. His circumstances, thus honourably narrow, induced him to turn, on quitting office, to private means of maintaining his family. He became a contractor for the beasts, and perhaps for the slaves, of Africa, destined for the Roman market. Following, however, in the train of Nero, during that prince's sojourn in Greece, he gave offence, and incurred some peril, by the bluntness of his manner. It seems that he could not always keep awake through the emperor's displays of singing and acting; an indecorum intolerable to the vain performer, who at last peevishly dismissed him.[1] But



We have here two instances of the practice, common at the time, of giving the elder son the father's, and the younger the mother's cognomen. See also Suet. *Otho*, 1., *Vitell.* 6. Titus seems to have been the common prænomen of all.

[1] The story is told by Tacitus, *Ann.* xvi. 5., and referred to by Suetonius, *Vesp.* 4.

when disturbances began to arise in Judea, his military qualities were not to be slighted. Nero intrusted him with the government of Palestine, and the command of the forces soon to be called into action there. His temper was prone to superstition.[1] His advance had been hitherto signal; he felt confidence in his own abilities, and believed himself a favourite of fortune; he was surrounded, like every Roman in high station abroad, by flatterers, who nourished every thought of pride or vanity, and, amidst a nation of fanatics, prophets were not wanting to apply to the renowned Vespasianus the omens which were supposed popularly to point to a Jewish deliverer and Messiah. The successes he gained in his first encounters with the Jews encouraged him to brood over these shadowy intimations; and, when he visited the summit of Mount Carmel to sacrifice to the deity of the spot, the priest declared, on inspecting the entrails, that whatever he was purposing, whether it were to build a house, to buy an estate, or to increase his family of slaves, the mansion should be ample, the property vast, the number of his dependents unusually great. His attendants, aware of the ideas he was beginning to harbour, spread this oracular sentence far and near, and the eyes of the soldiers and provincials were turned more freely and fixed more devoutly upon the sturdy veteran than ever. To Nero, to Galba, to Otho, as they appeared successively on the scene, he frankly offered his own and his soldiers' obedience; but with every change of dynasty, his submission to the choice of the capital was more and more shaken, and he was strongly affected by the silence with which the oath he tendered to Vitellius was received by the troops he commanded.[2]

[1] Aurelius Victor says of him: "Simul divinis deditus, quorum vera plerisque negotiis compererat." *Cæsar.* 9.
[2] Tac. *Hist.* i. 74.

Vespasian recommended to the Syrian legions, and proclaimed emperor at Alexandria by the prefect of Egypt.

Nevertheless Vespasian, with the discretion which became his years and experience, was not lightly moved to enter the field against the chief accepted at Rome. Besides his own fortunes, those of two sons—Titus and Domitianus, the one already launched in the career of public service, the other just entering upon it—trembled in the balance, and he hesitated to expose their brilliant prospects to the chances of a military revolution. He well knew, as a general, the valour of the Germanic forces, with which he had himself served: perhaps he remembered that, at least since the times of Sulla, the forces of the East had never measured themselves with success against the hardier warriors of the Western world. The governor of Palestine, moreover, was dependent on the higher authority and wider command of the Syrian proconsul. Vespasian would shrink from the call of public favour while Mucianus still adhered to the new emperor, however loose and reluctant such an adherence might be. But when Mucianus himself urged him to the enterprise, and offered all the weight of his support, hesitation would be merely pusillanimous. After several private conferences to which he was invited on the borders of his province, the proconsul led him to the cantonments of the Syrian army, and recommended his cause to its support. He was received with enthusiasm. Men and officers, impatient at the superior fortune of their rivals in the West, exulting perhaps in the prospect of returning in triumph to Italy, vied with one another in urging their favourite to action, while he still cautiously restrained them from saluting him with the irrevocable title of Emperor. Mucianus returned to Antioch to complete his preparations; Vespasian himself to his own head-quarters at Cæsarea. Tiberius Alexander, Nero's prefect in Egypt, declared for the new competitor; thus securing the flank of

his position in Palestine, assuring the maintenance of his troops in the East, and threatening Rome itself with the loss of its most plenteous storehouse. The prefect, indeed, was the first to invite his soldiers to proclaim Vespasian Emperor: it was from the first of July, the day of this solemn inauguration at Alexandria, that the annals of the new principate were afterwards dated.[1] The Judean legions followed, on the third of the same month, with the ardour of a common instinct. The word Imperator was first dropped, as it were, by accident: it was immediately caught up, passed from rank to rank, and finally ratified by the unanimous acclamations of the whole army. The titles of Cæsar and Augustus were speedily added. Mucianus was prepared for action. As soon as the report arrived at Antioch, he proposed the oath to his legions there, and, proceeding to the theatre, harangued the people fluently in Greek, with a grace which charmed them: to the soldiers he represented that Vitellius had resolved to quarter his Gauls and Germans in the luxurious stations of Syria, and transfer to the savage North the troops which had revelled so long in the pleasures of Asia. The provincials were terrified at the prospect of this settlement of barbarians among them; the soldiers were not only alarmed but exasperated.[2]

Preparations of Vespasian for contesting the empire.

By the 15th of July all the legions of Syria and the eastern frontier had pledged themselves to the new aspirant. They were supported by the vassals or allies of the empire; by Sohemus, king of Ituræa; by Antiochus, king of Commagene; by Agrippa, a younger son of Herod, the nominal sovereign of some petty districts of Palestine, long retained at Rome, whence he had

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 29.; Suet. *Vesp.* 6. The second date (v. non. Jul.) is taken from Tacitus, and is preferable to that given by Suetonius (v. Id. Jul., *i. e.* the 11th).

[2] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 74—78.

managed, on the news of the impending revolution, to escape to his own dominions; and by his sister Berenice, queen of Chalcis, intriguing and beautiful, and in favour with Vespasian, old as he was. From Achaia to Armenia, all the provinces of the East followed the common impulse, to range the eastern half of the empire against the western. Mucianus summoned his chief adherents to a meeting at Berytus. Money was demanded, levies were ordered, garrisons stationed, magazines and arsenals established. A base was laid for extensive and prolonged operations. Vespasian was full of activity, lavishing exhortations or praises, as each were required; paying court to the senators resident in the province; engaging the Parthians and Armenians to respect the frontiers; laborious, vigilant, discreet in all things; showing himself fit to wield the empire by the firmness with which he withheld from the soldiers any extravagant largess. Titus was charged with the conduct of affairs in Judæa, while he undertook himself to secure the footing promised him in Egypt. The forces of the East were divided into three armies; one of these was deemed sufficient to confront the legions of Vitellius; the second was destined to control revolt within the frontiers; the third to repress aggression from beyond them. The new emperor made preparations for maintaining the integrity of the empire at the moment when he was bending all his energies to acquire it; such had been the policy which gained favour and admiration for Augustus; *Senate, People, and Gods*, would declare, as of old, for the man who devoted himself to the true interests of the republic; even the prætorians would acknowledge him as their legitimate chief, and break their unworthy bondage to a selfish voluptuary.[1]

Mucianus led the van with deliberate and majestic

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 79—83.

march, neither hurrying forwards, as if anxious or impatient, nor loitering, as if indifferent to success. The strong current swept all lesser bodies into its vortex. Officers, military and civil, Romans and provincials, ships and soldiers, arms and treasures, were all wafted along in a stream of increasing weight and volume. *Money*, said Mucianus, *is the sinews of civil war.*[1] An invader might throw himself on the enemy's country for support; but the leader of a party must depend on a well-filled military chest. Of his own means he gave largely; but he was not more abstinent than the chiefs of former revolutions in requiring contributions from his adherents, or extorting treasure from the temples and other public sources. The tide of arms rolled away; but the taxes now imposed by Vespasian's lieutenant were transferred as the legacy of war to the peace which followed; for Vespasian himself though averse in the first instance to imposing them, was too well satisfied with their returns ever to remit them. And now three Illyrian legions joined; the Third, the Eighth, and the Seventh or Claudian, faithful to Otho as the friend of Nero, and heir to the fortunes of the family from which it derived its title.[2] These legions had advanced as far as Aquileia to fight for their favourite, and on hearing of his death, stoned the bearer of the news, tore the colours which bore the name of Vitellius, sacked the military chest, and impetuously defied the conqueror. They now rejoiced in the opportunity of transferring

Mucianus advances westward and receives powerful support.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 84.: "Eos esse belli *civilis* nervos." We have adopted the phrase as a rhetorical commonplace, applying it to war in general; but our author is more precise. The metaphor, however, had already been employed by Cicero (*Philipp.* v. 2.): "nervi civilis belli pecunia infinita."

[2] The name of Claudian was given, as may be remembered, to this legion as a reward for its zeal in suppressing the revolt of Scribonianus. See vol. vi., chap. xlix.

themselves to Vespasian, and speedily brought over to him two other legions stationed in Pannonia, which were followed by the garrisons of Dalmatia. The seeds of still further defection were scattered by letters to the troops in Spain and Gaul, and particularly to the Fourteenth legion, now sullenly retiring towards Britain.[1]

Conduct of Vitellius at Rome.

At the moment that the army in Syria was proclaiming Vespasian emperor, Vitellius was making his entry into Rome, at the head of four legions, twelve squadrons of horse, and thirty-four auxiliary cohorts, a veteran force of sixty thousand men, but corrupted by three months of licence. His first act was to sacrifice in the Capitol, and there he embraced his mother, on whom he pressed the title of Augusta: the next day he harangued the people and senate, in the strain of a foreign conqueror rather than of a citizen, with much ill-merited praise of his own moderation and vigilance. His career, however, in the city was attended from the first with evil omens. The first edict he issued as Chief Pontiff was dated the 15th kalends of August (July 18th), the day of the Allia and Cremera.[2] Yet his behaviour in the senate-house, the forum, and the theatre, seems to have been modest and becoming. He was assiduous in attending the discussions of the fathers, even on matters of trifling concern. He suffered himself to be opposed, or was satisfied, if warmly attacked, with invoking the protection of the tribunes. Even then he soon recovered his composure, and would only remark that it was nothing new or strange for two senators to differ; *for his own part*, he would add, *he had sometimes disagreed with Thrasea.* The comparison thus implied between the sage and the profligate, the patriot and the usurper, provoked some bitter de-

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 85, 86.; Suet. *Vesp.* 6.
[2] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 91.; Suet. *Vitell.* 11.

rision. But this outward moderation betokened only the easy compliance of his character. Cæcina and Valens, it was soon found, were the real governors of the empire. The chief appointments were all made through their influence, which they exerted with mutual rivalry. They enriched themselves at the same time with the estates and houses both of friends and enemies, while the decrees for restoring their possessions to the recalled exiles were generally allowed to be frustrated. They studied to engross their master in the low debauchery to which he was naturally addicted, while they took the cares of empire off his hands. He passed his days and nights in feasting and sleeping, and while the treasury was empty, and the promised donative could not be discharged, he lavished all the money he could grasp in the indulgence of the coarsest appetites. Within the few months of his power he spent, as was computed, nine hundred millions of sesterces, above seven millions of our money, in vulgar and brutal sensuality.[1] But the soldiers, defrauded of their stipulated reward, required other compensation, and they were permitted to range the city freely, and taste its amusements and dissipations, to the ruin of their habits and discipline. The prætorians had been disbanded, and the ordinary police of the city was neglected. The legionaries

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 95.: "Novies millies sestertium paucissimis mensibus intervertisse creditur." The Romans were generally content with a single meal, the cœna: the slight refections of the morning and midday, jentaculum and prandium, were rarely taken in company. But Vitellius had his banquets thrice or four times in the day, adding to the above-named a comissatio, or "revel," at night. To the abstemious people of the South such gluttony seemed prodigious; but Vitellius had recourse to the vomit. His brother gave him a supper in which 2000 fishes and 7000 birds were served up. Vitellius had an immense dish made, which he called the "Shield of Minerva," and loaded with peacocks' and pheasants' tongues, and roes of the mullet and scarus: his delicacies were brought him from the Caspian and the Straits of Gibraltar. Comp. for these and other extravagancies, Suet. *Vitell.* 13.; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxxv. 46.; Dion, lxv. 3.

chose their own quarters at will, and when these rude children of the North stretched their tents on the pleasant but unhealthy slopes of the Vatican, they suffered severely from intemperance in food and bathing, as well as from the malaria of the spot. It became necessary to re-embody the prætorian and the urban guards. Valens took this important charge on himself, to the exclusion of his colleague. He drafted twenty-thousand of the legionaries into these favoured bands; but the legions were left thereby not weakened only, but discontented. They were to be gratified in their turn with fresh indulgences. Vitellius conceded to them the execution of three Gaulish nobles who had fought for Vindex; so far back did their animosity reach. The emperor's birthday was celebrated with an immense show of gladiators, and Nero's obsequies were performed in the Campus Martius. The tyrant's body was removed from the sarcophagus in which it had been deposited, and laid on a funeral pyre.[1] The Augustales applied the torch, and the ashes, I presume, of the last of the Julii were finally consigned to the mausoleum of Augustus. The reign of the freedmen recommenced; Asiaticus and Polycletus, such were the names of the creatures of Vitellius, recalled by their avarice and audacity the memory of the favourites of Claudius. The degradation of Rome, hardly awakened from its dream of independence, was as complete as it was sudden, and never yet perhaps had she sunk so low in sensuality and licentiousness, as in the few months which followed on the death of Otho.

The spell was broken by the first cry of military

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 95.; Suet. *Vitell.* 11. The author quoted by Suidas in voc. Βιτέλλιος, says expressly that the corpse, νεκρός, of Nero, was removed from its original sepulchre. But this sepulchre was *not* the obscure place he supposes. Suetonius describes it, on the contrary, as a sarcophagus (solium) of porphyry, crowned with an altar-slab of white Carrara marble, and inclosed in a vault of Thasian stone. *Ner.* 50.

defection. The Third legion, it was announced, had revolted; but the whole truth was still withheld from the public ear. Aid was hastily summoned from Spain Britain, and Germany. But the provinces were unmoved, and the chiefs of the legions hesitated. Hordeonius pleaded that he was threatened by the Batavi, and could not spare troops; Bolanus, beyond the Channel, that he was fully occupied with the defence of his posts on the Trent and Severn. Spain had no chief of consular rank, and her officers were too jealous one of another to take a step in advance. Africa alone responded cheerfully. The indolence of Vitellius had made him a favourite with the troops he had formerly commanded there, whereas Vespasian's strictness had offended them, and they remembered having once pelted him on his tribunal with turnips.[1] The adhesion of the African province was undoubtedly of great importance to balance the defection of Egypt; but in this crisis, when all depended on the strength and number of the allies which could be mustered on either side, the elements themselves conspired against the doomed Vitellius. A long prevalence of north-westerly winds bore to Greece and Asia intelligence of the movements of the one party, while it withheld from Italy all accounts of the operations of the other. The occupation of Illyricum and Rhætia by Vespasian's adherents, enabled him at the same time to close the communications by land. Vitellius continued long to indulge in fatal security. At last the imminence of danger could not be disguised. Valens and Cæcina were despatched to the north of Italy, and with them marched the languid and broken remnants of the Germanic legions: their ranks were thin; their pace was slow; their arms rusty or decayed; even their horses were out of con-

Vitellius is deserted in some quarters, and feebly supported in others.

[1] Suet. *Vesp.* 4.

dition: they shrank from the heat, the dust, and the wind; nor did they bear the restraints of discipline better than the toils of service. Valens lingered some time behind, under the plea of illness: Cæcina, it was believed, already meditated defection; certainly he was jealous of his colleague's influence, and might hope for more consideration under another master. The Vitellian forces were at last assembled in the plains of the lower Po, between Cremona and Ravenna, and there Cæcina began to corrupt the fidelity of the men and their officers, with the aid of Bassus, prefect of the Adriatic fleet, whose influence extended to the marine cohorts, still mindful of Galba's severity and of Otho's favours.[1]

Antonius Primus leads Vespasian's forces into Italy.

The three Flavian legions,—such is the title we may give to the adherents of Vespasian,—which had now seized the passes of the Julian Alps, and were preparing to pour down into Italy, were commanded by Antonius Primus. While some of his officers advised delay, to await the arrival of Mucianus, this spirited partisan would listen to no such timid counsels. He was anxious to be the first of his faction in the field. He despised the adversary before him; perhaps he had secret communications with Cæcina. Nevertheless, his strength was much inferior to that of the enemy, and the resolution to rush headlong into the midst of them seems rash and precipitate. But the first engagements that occurred were favourable to the invaders. The outposts of the Vitellians were driven back from the head of the Adriatic. The Flavians crossed the deep and rapid rivers, and turned or carried every fortress, till they arrived before Verona, and spread their numerous and well-appointed cavalry over the broad plains around it. Here indeed Cæcina, it seems, might, if he chose,

[1] Tac. *Hist.* ii. 101.

have overwhelmed them; but he contented himself with issuing manifestos against their chief; nor in these did he exhibit much confidence. Primus retorted in a bolder strain. He was overtaken by letters from Mucianus, rebuking his haste and requiring him to wait for the reinforcements. Vespasian, too, announced that he was in possession of Egypt, and could reduce Vitellius to capitulate, by withholding her supplies from Rome. But Primus retained his confidence, and determined to win the victory alone. The legates of two legions shared his authority, and encumbered his schemes: an opportune revolt of their soldiers, fomented perhaps by himself, enabled him to remove them from the camp, under pretence of providing for their security. He was now sole commander, and eager to push his advantage. The defection of the fleet at Ravenna from Vitellius increased his ardour. Cæcina would have played into his hands, but was prevented from consummating the treachery by his own soldiers; and now both armies prepared for a decisive action on the plain of Bedriacum, where the Vitellians, amidst all their present discouragements, were inspired with the recollection of recent triumph. Left without a general themselves, for they had thrown Cæcina into chains, they were opposed to a bold and able leader, and, as on the former occasion, victory now declared for the army which was best commanded. The Flavians were twice saved from defeat by the energy of Primus; and when at last Cremona fell into their hands, the remnant of the Vitellian legions broke and dispersed in all directions.[1]

And defeats the Vitellians at Bedriacum.

Cremona was a Roman colony, established as a check upon the Gauls of the Cisalpine, and a barrier against more distant invaders. Well placed on a

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 15—35.; Suet. *Vitell.* 15.; Dion, lxv. 10—15.

navigable stream amidst a fertile country, it rapidly increased in numbers and importance; but its wealth had tempted once before the cupidity of a conqueror, and it deserved under the Triumvirs the epithet of *hapless*, which was now to become more terribly appropriate.[1] Unscrupulous as the Romans had ever shown themselves in spoiling foes, or even dependents and allies, they had rarely, even in the worst licence of civil conflict, surrendered their own colonies to the fate of war. But the example of Præneste under Sulla was now to be repeated, with at least equal horrors. After a brave defence, the camp of the Vitellians had been forced; the town had capitulated with an assurance of protection. But Primus, as an intriguer and adventurer, had bought the swords of his soldiers by hopes which he had not yet redeemed. They awaited impatiently a word or gesture to commence the work of plunder, possibly they had already commenced it; and when, in taking a bath after the fatigues of the attack, he remarked that the water was not warm enough, the words of the attendant, *It shall soon be hotter*, were caught up by the troops around him, and perverted into an order, or accepted as an omen, for burning the city. Cremona was sacked with every aggravation of cruelty and brutality; her people were abused and slaughtered; her buildings levelled with the ground; one edifice alone, the temple of Mephitis, the deity of the surrounding marshes, escaped the indiscriminate destruction.[2]

Bestiality of Vitellius: his fears, cruelties, and disasters.

But Vitellius, says Tacitus, *after the departure of Cæcina, and presently of Valens, drowned his cares in voluptuousness; he neither collected arms, nor harangued or trained his soldiers, nor showed himself everywhere in public; but burying himself in the shade of his gardens, like those slothful brutes, which, if you give them*

[1] Virg. *Ecl.* ix. 28.: "Miseræ vicina Cremonæ."
[2] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 33.

food, lie still and slumber, left the present, the imminent, and the distant, all in the same forgetfulness.[1] He was lounging lazily in the groves of Aricia when the defection of his fleet was announced to him, and struck him with consternation. The treachery of Cæcina followed; but in this case his alarm was relieved by learning that the traitor was captured and detained. Nevertheless his spirits were depressed, and all courage and confidence soon failed him. Trembling and suspicious, he was easily impelled to cruelty. To his fears he sacrificed a man of high distinction, Junius Blæsus, who, it seems, had allowed himself, in this crisis, to hold a banquet in his house. He was accused of treasonable aspirations. His Junian and Antonian blood were held sufficient to condemn him. Vitellius caused him to be poisoned, then visited and affected to condole with him in his sickness, remarking afterwards that he had feasted his eyes with the sight of a dying enemy. The deed, the motive, and the manner, as reported by common fame, were treasured up by the affronted nobles of Rome, to whose indignation we may perhaps ascribe a part at least of the stories which have stamped Vitellius as the most bestial of tyrants.[2] Valens meanwhile, finding, as he advanced towards the Cisalpine, that the country was in the hands of the Flavians, and perceiving that the reinforcements he brought with him were too few to overcome, too numerous to pass them unperceived, sent on his main body to Ariminum, to do the best they could for themselves; but turned aside himself with a few followers only, crossed the Apennines, and hearing of the capture of Cremona, took ship at Pisæ, in-

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 36.: "Umbraculis hortorum abditus, ut ignava animalia, quibus si cibum suggeras, jacent torpentque, præterita, instantia, futura, pari oblivione dimiserat."

[2] The charge against Vitellius of setting up Nero openly as his pattern in the empire (see Suet. *Vitell.* 11.), has the air of a senatorial misrepresentation.

tending to throw himself into the Narbonensis, and organize the Vitellians in the province. Adverse winds compelled him to land at the Portus Monœci. The coast was occupied by Valerius Paulinus, a Flavian. The treacherous sea seemed less hostile than the land, and Valens launched again upon the waves. Once more he was driven ashore on the islands called Stœchades, and was made prisoner. The news of these losses spread rapidly through the West, and Spain, Gaul, and Britain declared without reserve in favour of Vespasian.[1]

Slow and cautious policy of Vespasian.

The withdrawal of numerous battalions from the defence of the frontiers gave the barbarians, in many quarters, an opportunity which they did not fail to seize. In Britain, in Germany, in Dacia, the outposts of the empire were attacked, and the majesty of Rome insulted. But of these petty disturbances I will not pause to speak here. The aggressions of the Dacians, which alone could have had any effect in checking the progress of the Flavian generals, were repressed by Mucianus, the victory at Cremona coming opportunely to release one of his legions from the necessity of facing the Vitellians. At the same time, the attention of Vespasian was recalled from his great enterprise by a movement on the far distant shores of the Euxine, and he paused to detach a force to Trapezus, to check the revolt of an ambitious freedman. Success in this quarter, and victory in Italy, were announced to him at the same moment. He hastened his march towards Alexandria, with the avowed purpose of threatening Rome with famine. His plan was to advance from Egypt, by land and sea, into the province of Africa, and grasp both the granaries of Italy. Yet this slow and wary policy was not without its dangers. Amidst the chances of civil war, swiftness of move-

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 44.

ment is generally the first condition of success. New perils multiply at every step. Foes may be routed, but at the next moment friends may become foes. The triumphs of Primus had already turned his head. He thought the question between the rival emperors decided, and by himself alone. Uncontrolled by a superior on the spot, he acted for himself and his legions as though he were king of Italy, extorting and plundering at his own pleasure, and repelling, not without scorn, the rebukes of Mucianus, while his despatches even to Vespasian were composed in the spirit of an equal rather than a subject. But Primus, adroit as a chief of freebooters in managing the temper of his soldiers, was no match in policy for statesmen and imperators.[1]

Vitellius puts himself at the head of his forces.

Vitellius was still at Rome, still grovelling in his sensuality, refusing even to credit the account of his disasters. He forbade the subject to be discussed, and suppressed, as far as he could, the reports which circulated about it. The Flavian generals sent him back their prisoners, that he might know the truth from the mouths of actual witnesses. Vitellius saw, interrogated, and immediately executed them. A brave centurion extorted his leave to visit the scene of warfare, and ascertain the state of affairs; but, spurned and insulted on his return by his infatuated chief, he threw himself indignantly on his sword. At last, Vitellius roused himself to despatch fourteen prætorian cohorts, with a legion of marines, and some squadrons of horse, to occupy the passes of the Apennines. He placed his brother Lucius in command of the city, and made some faint efforts to conciliate the nobles by the appointment of consuls for several years forward. At the same time he conferred the Latin privileges upon allies and subjects, reckless of the future con-

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 45—53.

dition of the realm which was passing so rapidly from his hands. Finally, he advanced in person, at the impatient demand of his soldiers, to the camp at Mevania, at the foot of the mountains which constituted the last barrier between Rome and the invaders.[1]

He suffers reverses and falls back upon Rome.

But now a fresh mishap befel him. The fleet at Misenum, the guard or convoy of the corn-fleets, revolted: the soldiers on board, moreover, were trained to act on land, and they provoked an insurrection against him in Campania. Capua, with its schools of gladiators, held out for Vitellius, while the patrician retreat of Puteoli declared against him. The first officer he sent to check this movement went over, with his forces, to the enemy; and the Flavian partisans, thus increased in strength and numbers, occupied the walls of Tarracina. Vitellius, in dismay and consternation, now drew his troops nearer to Rome, leaving the Apennines open to the enemy, and sought, by frantic promises and entreaties, to induce the senators, the knights, and even the lowest of the citizens, to offer men, arms, and money in aid of his falling fortunes. The news of the rising in Campania roused the Marsians, the Pelignians, and the Samnites.[2] The heart of Italy was more excited by the personal struggle of two obscure adventurers, than by the war of classes in the last age of the republic. The cold and wet of the winter season, which had now set in, was the last ally of Vitellius; and the difficulty with which Antonius at length overcame this mountain barrier, though unopposed, showed how easily the emperor might have checked and perhaps destroyed him in the attempt. But the passage

Antonius crosses the Apennines.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 54, 55.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 59.: "Erectus Samnis, Pelignusque, et Marsi, æmulatione quod Campania prævenisset, ut in novo obsequio, ad cuncta belli munia acres erant."

was now effected: the two armies confronted each other in the valley of the Nar. Deserted by their emperor, and without a leader, the Vitellians had no spirit for fighting. The head of Valens, kept some time in custody, and now slain at Urbinum, was exhibited to them: a trophy which awed them into submission. Antonius received them with clemency, and breaking them in two divisions for greater security, was content with setting watch over their movements, and suffered them to retain their arms. He then proceeded to offer terms to Vitellius himself, promising him life, large revenues, and a quiet retreat in Campania, as the reward of submission. These offers were confirmed by Mucianus. Vitellius, stunned by his misfortunes, passively acquiesced. Had not the foe, says Tacitus, remembered that he had once been emperor, he would himself have forgotten it. It is gratifying, however, to find that in the heat of a Roman civil war, one rival could make such assurances of clemency, and the other could confide in them.[1]

Vitellius offers to resign the empire, but is prevented by his soldiers.

Nevertheless the advent of Primus and his plundering legions was anticipated with horror by the chief citizens. Their object was to save Rome, whatever else might happen, from the licence of an invading army. Vitellius had retained in the city, observed but not guarded, the brother and the younger son of his rival. Fear for himself and for his own family, as in Otho's case, had introduced this new feature of mercy and consideration into the quarrels of party chiefs. Flavius Sabinus was some years older than Vespasian, the head of their house, and the wealthier of the two. Devoid of personal ambition, and only anxious to spare effusion of blood, he listened willingly to the instances of the nobles, now gathered

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 60—63.

round him, urging him to assume the lead of his brother's faction, and discuss personally with Vitellius the terms of accommodation. In the temple of Apollo, with one witness from among the chiefs on either side, the transfer of the empire was debated and settled.[1] But, unfortunately, the city was still filled with the fugitives from so many disasters, desperate swordsmen who could not endure the shame of yielding. They muttered in the ears of their trembling chief, that there was no hope of safety for him in a private station. The present danger, however, seemed more terrible than the distant, and he could not be prevailed on to arm again. He issued from the palace, clothed in black, his family in mourning around him.[2] His infant child was borne in a litter. The procession might have been taken for a funeral. The people applauded compassionately, but the soldiers frowned in silence. Vitellius made a short harangue in the forum, and then, taking his dagger from his side, as the ensign of power, tendered it to the consul Cæcilius. The soldiers murmured aloud, and the consul, in pity or from fear, declined to accept it. He then turned towards the temple of Concord, meaning there to leave the symbols of imperial office, and retire to the house of his brother. But the soldiers now interposed. They would not suffer him to hide himself in a private dwelling, but compelled him to retrace his steps to the palace, which he entered once more, hardly conscious whether he were still emperor or not.[3]

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 65.: "Sæpe domi congressi (in the palace?) postremo in æde Apollinis pepigere." The temple of Apollo was probably that on the Palatine, connected with the imperial residence. Either it had suffered little in Nero's fire, or it had been speedily restored.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 67., xv. Kal. Jan. (Dec. 18. 822): "Audita defectione legionis cohortiumque, quæ se Narniæ dediderant."

[3] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 68.: "Interclusum aliud iter, idque solum quod in Sacram Viam pergeret patebat." Vitellius had descended into the Via Sacra by the Porta Mugionis, traversed the forum, ascended

Sabinus takes refuge in the Capitol.

By the senate, however, by the knights, the magistrates, and police of the city, the transfer of the empire was regarded as accomplished. All crowded to the mansion of Sabinus, as the representative of their new sovereign, and there heard, not without dismay, the murmurs and menaces of the Germanic cohorts. They urged Sabinus to arm at once for their defence, for his own defence, for the defence of his brother's throne; but their force was small, their measures were hastily taken, and while conveying him towards the palace, which they wished him at once to occupy, they were met, at a spot called Fundanius' pool, by the enraged Vitellians, attacked, and routed.[1] Sabinus, with those nearest to him, made for the Capitoline hill, and threw himself into the enclosed precincts of the Capitolium, or temple of Jupiter. The Vitellians contented themselves with watching the outlets during the day; but at night they were too indolent or too careless to keep guard through a violent storm of rain, and Sabinus was enabled to communicate with his friends in the city, to receive Domitianus and his own children into his place of refuge, and notify his peril to the Flavian generals beyond the walls. At dawn he sent to Vitellius to complain of the violation of their agreement, and remind him of the good faith with which he had himself acted, and the indulgence with which, though backed by a conquering

the rostra, and proceeded to the temple of Concord at the foot of the Capitoline. He would have retired to the house of Sabinus, which I conjecture (see the following note) to have been in the direction of the Quirinal; but the soldiers compelled him to return by the same way he had come. "Tum consilii inops in palatium rediit."

[1] Of the Lacus Fundani we only learn from an inscription (Gruter, 396. 5.) that it gave name to a Vicus. The Curtian and Servilian pools indicated ancient swamps in the trough of the forum, which had been drained by the great Cloaca. Possibly the Fundanian Pool was a similar spot near the Suburra. It seems, from the narrative, that it lay nearly between the house of Sabinus and the Palatine. The inscription is said to have been found on the Quirinal.

army, he had treated his opponent. Vitellius assented to these representations, but pleaded his inability to restrain his own soldiers, and could only indicate to the envoy a secret way of exit from the palace. Scarcely had this officer returned to the Capitol, when the Vitellians rushed tumultuously, without a leader, to the assault. They mounted the ascent from the forum to the main entrance of the enclosure, and reached an outer gate on the slope, as it would appear, of the Clivus[1]: the Flavians issued on the roofs of the colonnades which flanked the right side of the ascent, and hurled stones and tiles on the assailants. They in their turn, not being furnished with military engines, nor pausing to send for them, threw blazing brands into the colonnades, which were probably of wood, and thus drove the defenders from arch to arch, till the fire reached the gate. The doors would have been soon consumed, and the Vitellians would have rushed into the enclosure, but Sabinus had torn from their pedestals the statues of gods and men which thronged the precincts of the temple, and cast them down

Attack and defence of the Capitol.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 71.: "Cito agmine forum et imminentia foro templa prætervecti, erigunt aciem per adversum collem, usque ad primas Capitolinæ arcis fores." For a full discussion of the topography of this interesting passage I must refer the reader to a notice in the *Journal of Classical Philology*, No. x. Mar. 1857. It may suffice to state in this place the conclusions to which I am led.—1. The point of attack was the Capitoline temple or Capitol, called by Tacitus Capitolium and Arx Capitolina. 2. This temple stood on the Tarpeian or S.W. summit of the Capitoline hill, the N.W. summit (the site of the present Araceli) being the arx proper, at this time an indefensible position. 3. The outer gate ("primæ fores") was perhaps that known by the name of the Porta Pandana, on the ascent of the Capitoline, beneath the Tabularium. 4. The ascent by the Hundred Steps was from the Velabrum to the left. 5. That by the Lucus Asyli was from the Forum and Carcer to the right. 6. The second attack was made from the level of the Asylum (about the present steps by the Conservators' palace), the assailants having turned the exterior defences of the Capitol beneath the Tabularium. These defences, indeed, had been only extemporized, for the Porta Pandana was generally left open, from whence it took its name.

before the gates to form a barrier. Thus baffled, the assailants retreated down the hill to the forum, where two other ways branched off, the one immediately to the right, ascending to the Asylum between the Tabularium and the Carcer; the other in the opposite direction, and much more circuitous, passing through the Velabrum beneath the Tarpeian rock, and so by the flight of the Hundred Stairs to the platform of the Capitol. On each side there were, as it appears, lateral approaches to the temple; that from the Asylum was the nearest, and here the Vitellians pressed with the greatest force and numbers. The base of the Capitol was about thirty feet higher than that of the Asylum; but they easily scaled the houses, which leant against the wall, and rose to the level of the enclosing rampart.[1] The assailants forced their way by fire, the defenders strove by the same means to obstruct their progress, nor was it known from which side the flames alighted on the roofs of the Capitoline buildings, spread along the galleries which surrounded the triple cell, and finally kindled the gable of dry and ancient wood which crowned its summit.[2] The whole temple was soon in

Conflagration of the temple.

[1] The Capitoline temple comprehended three cells, those of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, beneath a single roof and pediment. It may have been about fifty feet in width, and less, I suppose, in height; built of stone, but the roof of wood. It was surrounded on three sides by rows of pillars, double at the sides, triple in front, but seems to have been closed in with a blank wall at the back. This precinct was nearly a square of two hundred feet, erected upon a stone platform, which itself was supported by vast substructions from the base of the hill. There seems to have been also an outer precinct, the Area Capitolina, perhaps only in front, and the whole, it may be presumed, was enclosed with a wall. The Capitol faced S. (Liv. i. 55.), more precisely, I imagine, S.E., fronting the Forum.

[2] Tac. *l. c.* "Inde lapsus ignis in porticus appositas ædibus; mox sustinentes fastigium aquilæ vetere ligno traxerunt flammam alueruntque." The "aquilæ" are the leaning rafters which formed the angle of the pediment, which seem to have been open, according to the well-known description of the temple in the *Iphigenia in Tauris* of Euripides. We are not to suppose that the temples of Rome at this period were generally constructed so rudely; but the priests had

a blaze from end to end, and the august sanctuary of the Roman people was consumed in the raging conflagration.

Domitian escapes. Sabinus is taken and slain.

The assault, the defence, the conflagration, were watched by Vitellius from the palace opposite; by the Roman people from the Forum and Velabrum beneath, as well as from the summit of every hill. *The Gauls*, they exclaimed, *were again masters of the city; yet even the Gauls had never burnt the Capitol, nor overthrown the sacred pledge of empire, the shrine of Jupiter, the Best and Greatest, the shrine vowed by Tarquinius Priscus, and built from the spoils of war by Superbus.* Once indeed, in the first civil war, that holy fane had been consumed by fire; but it had risen again from its ashes, erected by Sulla and dedicated by Catulus, whose honoured name had continued to grace its summit amidst so many monuments devoted to the glory of the Cæsars.[1] The fugitives within the precincts were dismayed with horror at the scene. Sabinus lost all courage and presence of mind, and made no further attempt at defence. The Gauls and Germans, checked by no reverence for Roman divinities, burst in with yells of triumph, and put to the sword all that could not escape in the confusion. Domitian contrived with a freedman's help, to disguise himself in priest's robes, and found an asylum with a servant of the temple.[2] Sabinus was seized, bound and carried to Vitellius; the populace clamoured for his death, as the author

insisted that the Capitol should be rebuilt, after the Sullan conflagration, exactly on the ancient model.

[1] See above, chap. iv. of this work (vol. i. p. 134, note). Notwithstanding the decree of the senate for the substitution of Cæsar's name for that of Catulus, the original inscription remained. Tacitus says expressly: "Lutatii Catuli nomen inter tanta Cæsarum opera usque ad Vitellium mansit."

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 74.: "Lineo amictu." Comp. Suet. *Domit.* 1.: "Isiaci elatus habitu."

of the national calamity; and Vitellius in vain expostulated with them before the doors of the palace. The old man was struck down, pierced and mutilated, and his headless trunk dragged to the Gemoniæ. Atticus, one of the consuls who was taken with him, saved himself by declaring that his own hand had fired the Capitol. The Vitellians were satisfied with this avowal, which seemed to relieve them from the crime, and the indignation of the citizens was already appeased by the blood of Sabinus.[1]

Antonius leads his forces to the gates of Rome.

But the blood of a brother of Vespasian could not sink into the ground. No more hope of pardon for the conquered; no room for retreat and unmolested privacy. The murderer of Sabinus must now rush to the field, or fall by the hand of the executioner. Meanwhile Lucius Vitellius had not yet laid down his arms. From his camp at Feronia he continued to watch Tarracina, and, gaining admittance there by treachery, slew the Flavian commander and his undisciplined partisans. Had he now returned at once to Rome, he would have met the Flavians in the heart of the city, and the conflict which would have ensued between them might have ended in its utter destruction. But he contented himself with sending to ask his brother whether he should return, or prosecute the reduction of Campania. By this delay the event was decided. Primus was advancing along the Flaminian Way, but leisurely, in order not to outstrip the arrival of Mucianus. At Ocriculum he halted for some days to keep the feast of the Saturnalia. However, he sent forward Petilius Cerealis with a thousand horse; and this squadron crossing from the Flaminian to the Salarian Way, attempted to penetrate into the city. But the Vitellians were on the alert, and received them with a mixed force of horse and foot in the

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 75.

lanes and among the garden walls outside the gates, where they checked and discomfited them. Primus had arrived at Saxa Rubra, when he learnt the destruction of the Capitol, the repulse of Cerealis, and the revived efforts of the Vitellians, who were arming the populace and the slaves. Vitellius himself had come forth in public, had harangued the citizens, and sent them forth *to defend their country:* he had convened the senate and appointed envoys to treat in the name of the republic. It was not a time when the voice of argument could be heard on either side, least of all, the sage maxims and gentle exhortations of a teacher of philosophy, such as the Stoic Musonius, who mingled unbidden with the deputation to Primus, and harangued the soldiers in their ranks on the blessings of peace and the pains and perils of warfare.[1] From smiles and jeers they would have proceeded to violence, had he not taken wiser counsel, and abstained from his unseasonable admonitions. The Vestals, who bore letters to the general, were treated with due respect; but their petition for a single day for conference was sternly rejected. The death of Sabinus, it was declared, and the destruction of the Capitol, had rendered parley impossible.[2]

Storm of the city, and combat in the streets.

Indeed the soldiers of Primus would brook not an instant's delay. They insisted on being led immediately to the gates, and panted for the last death-struggle with the foes whose colours they saw flying from the summits of the seven hills. The Flavian army advanced in three divisions; on the left by the Salarian Way to the Colline gate; on the right through fields and meadows along the

[1] We have last heard of this philosopher as digging in the trench of Nero's Isthmian canal. It seems that he had been restored, as a noble Roman, from exile, under Galba. Tac. *Hist.* iii. 81.: "Miscuerat se legatis Musonius Rufus, equestris ordinis, studium philosophiæ et placita Stoicorum æmulatus . . . . omisit intempestivam sapientiam."

[2] Tac. *Hist.* 76—81.

bank of the Tiber; the centre occupied the Flaminian road which led direct to the foot of the Capitol. The Vitellians went out to meet their assailants at all points, soldiers and rabble mingled together, without plan or order. But in one quarter only, beside the gardens of Sallust, on the slope of the Pincian, where the Flavians were impeded by narrow and slippery lanes, did they maintain the combat with some spirit, till a party of the assailants, bursting in through the Colline gate, took the defenders in the rear. At the centre and on the right the Flavians carried everything immediately before them, and drove their opponents with slaughter from the Campus Martius into the city. The victors entered pell-mell with the vanquished, for the gates of Rome now stood, it seems, always open, and the combat was renewed from street to street, the populace looking gaily on, applauding or hooting as in the theatre, and helping to drag the fugitives from the shops and taverns for slaughter. The rabble of the city, men and women, half-drunk, half-naked, dabbled in the blood of the dead and dying, or threw themselves into the defenceless houses, and snatched their plunder even from the hands of the soldiers. Rome had seen the conflicts of armed men in the streets under Sulla and Cinna, but never before such a hideous mixture of levity and ferocity; never before had her bastard brood, the worthless mob of the forum, betrayed so flagrantly their contempt for the weal and honour of their country.[1]

Storm of the prætorian camp.

Through all these horrors the Flavians forced their way without flinching, and drove the Vitellians to their last stronghold in the camp of the prætorians. The lines of this enclosure were strenuously attacked and desperately defended. The Vitellians had no hope of escape, none of quarter.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 82, 83.: "Nulla partium cura, malis publicis læti." Dion (lxv. 19.) computes the slain extravagantly at fifty thousand.

Intent on the capture of Rome, their assailants had brought with them on their march the engines requisite for a siege, and now set themselves to their last task with determination. They cleared the battlements with the catapult; raised mounds or towers to the level of the ramparts, or applied torches to the gates. Then bursting into the camp, they put every man still surviving to the sword. Vitellius, on the taking of the city, had escaped from the rear of the palace in a litter to the Aventine, where his wife possessed a residence, hoping to conceal himself through the day, and fly in the darkness of the night to his brother's stronghold in Tarracina. But his restlessness could not suffer him to remain there. He returned, under some strange impulse, once more to the palace, and roamed through its now deserted halls, dismayed at solitude and silence, yet shrinking from every sound, and the presence of a human being.[1] At last he was found, half hidden behind a curtain, by a tribune, and ignominiously dragged forth. With his hands bound, his dress torn, he was hurried along, amidst the scoffs of the multitude, and without one voice raised even in pity for his misfortunes. One of the Germanic soldiers meeting him, cut him down at once in fury, or possibly in mercy. But with the same blow the man had struck the tribune, and was immediately slain by his attendants. Vitellius himself was not mortally wounded, and was reserved for more pain and insult. The soldiers pricked him with their weapons, to urge him on, or stopped him to witness the demolition of his statues, and gaze upon the spot where Galba had fallen: they kept his head erect with a sword placed beneath his chin, flung mud and filth in his face,

Vitellius, hesitating to make his escape, is dragged from his concealment in the palace and slain.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 84.: "In palatium regreditur, vastum desertumque . . . . . terret solitudo et tacentes loci: tentat clausa; inhorrescit vacuis." Suet. *Vitell.* 16.

and smote his cheek with insolent mockery. At last they thrust or dragged him to the Gemoniæ, and there despatched him with many wounds.[1]

Concluding remarks on the character of Vitellius.

Yet I was once your Imperator, were the last words he uttered, and the worthiest that have been recorded of him.[2] He was once a Roman General; and to have commanded the legions was to have felt the dignity of a man responsible for the fate of armies and the welfare of provinces. He was once a Roman Emperor; and to have worn the imperial purple for nine months only was to fill a space in the world and leave a name in history. It was for this accident alone indeed that the name of Vitellius deserves to be registered in human annals. The frankness and good fellowship allowed him were at best trifling and commonplace merits, nor had he the force of character which may render a bad man remarkable. To his indolence, his profligacy, his beastly sensuality, we have overwhelming testimony. He was weak, easy-tempered, unprincipled, unscrupulous; he was selfish and hard-hearted; but the charge of ferocious cruelty made by some writers against him is hardly supported by Tacitus, and the stories regarding it do not always agree together. It is recorded to his credit, that he had spared not only the kinsman of Vespasian, who was to succeed him, but of Otho, whom he had supplanted.[3] Some allowance may fairly be made for

[1] Suetonius is particular in describing these insults: "Religatis post terga manibus, injecto cervicibus laqueo, veste discissa, seminudus . . . . reducto coma capite, ceu noxii solent, atque etiam mento mucrone gladii subrecto, ut visendam præberet faciam neve submitteret: quibusdam stercore et cœno incessentibus . . . . . tandem apud Gemonias minutissimis ictibus excarnificatus est. He is repeated by Dion, Eutropius, and Orosius.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 85.: "Vox una non degeneris animi . . . se tamen Imperatorem ejus fuisse." Dion, lxv. 21.

[3] Dion, lxv. 22. Tacitus allows of him (iii. 86.): "Inerat tamen simplicitas ac liberalitas . . . Amicitias . . . meruit magis quam habuit." Vitellius, according to the precise statement of Dion, lived

the countenance naturally given by his successor to the most disparaging view of his conduct. The account I have followed is circumstantial, and consistent, and I cannot abandon lines so vigorously traced by Tacitus, for the satire and ribaldry of Suetonius and Dion. Indeed the *Histories* of Tacitus, which give the narrative of these times in greater detail than it seems necessary here to follow, are in my judgment more to be relied on than his *Annals*. The pictures he has drawn of Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian, bear the full impress of truth. They exhibit characters aptly moulded by the circumstances in which they are placed, with such a mixture of good and evil as stamps them at once as genuine. Relieved from the painful duty of criticizing and correcting, I have had only to copy them on a smaller scale to the best of my humble ability.

The "Histories" of Tacitus more to be relied on than his "Annals."

The occupation of Rome by a conquering army, citizens in name, but with none of the feelings of citizens in their hearts, was a disaster long and painfully remembered. The utter rout and massacre of the vanquished did not calm at once the passions of the victors. *The war was over, but peace had not recommenced.* Armed bands continued to traverse the streets, without leaders or discipline, insulting or attacking all who displeased them, all whom they chose to regard as their enemies, many who had no other demerit than their respectable appearance. The thirst for blood was soon turned to a lust of plunder, and now, under pretence of searching for Vitellians, or often with no pretence at all, the soldiers broke into private houses, guided by slaves and clients, or even by professed friends of the wealthiest citizens. The chiefs of the Flavian party were un-

The Flavian leaders divide places and honours among themselves.

fifty-four years and eighty-nine days; born in September 768, died December 822.

able to restrain these excesses; they were too intent, perhaps, on securing the fruits of victory, to regard them. They had raised the young Domitian to the place and name of a Cæsar, and were now engaged in intriguing among themselves for office under him. The prefecture of the guards fell to Arrius Varus; but Antonius Primus secured the substance of power by obtaining superior influence over the young prince's mind. The slaves and valuables of the palace fell to the share of Primus, who claimed them almost avowedly, as the plunder due to his victory at Cremona.[1] One thing alone remained to complete that victory, the destruction of L. Vitellius and his faction still in arms in Tarracina. A squadron of horse was sent on as far as Aricia; the infantry of a single legion halted at no greater distance than Bovillæ. This demonstration was sufficient. L. Vitellius surrendered without conditions, and his troops were led disarmed to Rome in a sort of triumphal procession, between the ranks of their captors, scowling at the populace who poured forth to see them, and beheld their humiliation with flippant derision. Their chief was put to death, but the men were only kept for a time in custody; while the embers of civil war were easily stifled in Campania, where the Third legion was quartered as in a conquered country, not so much for the sake of precaution as to gratify a mass of greedy and unruly veterans.[2]

The Principate of Vespasian dates from July 1. 822.

The death of Vitellius on the 21st of December cleared the field for Vespasian; but the principate of the new emperor dated from the 1st of July, the day when the legions swore to him at Alexandria. The senators hastened to decree him all the honours and prero-

[1] This man seems neither to have obtained nor claimed the character of a Roman at all. It had been portended that Vitellius should fall into the hands of a Gaul, and Primus was born at Tolosa, and known in childhood by the native appellation of Beccus (bec), the beak of a cock. Suet. *Vitell.* 18.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 1, 2.; Dion, *l. c.*

gatives of empire in one magnificent manifesto, and paid zealous court to his son.[1] Vespasian himself was still far distant; nor, indeed, when the news of his triumph reached him, did he make any precipitate haste to assume in person the honours proffered him. His real dependence was on Mucianus, whom, true and faithful as he knew him to be, he could suffer to assume the airs of one who had conferred an empire he might have seized for himself. The despatches this proud soldier sent to the senate, while yet absent from the city, caused anxiety, and even alarm. The advice he presumed to give on public affairs might at least, it was remarked, have been reserved for his place among the senators; but its tone, in fact, savoured of the camp, rather than of the Curia. All, however, continued smooth externally. The triumphal ornaments were voted to him, ostensibly for the defence of Mœsia. The prætorian insignia were conferred on Primus and Varus; and on the same day a decree was passed for the restoration of the Capitol. The language and demeanour of the senators towards their new chief and his ministers were as fawning as under Nero. One of them alone, Helvidius Priscus, whose name became afterwards famous, spoke with no intemperate freedom.[2] He proposed

Decree for the restoration of the Capitol.

Motion of Helvidius Priscus.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 3.: "At Romæ Senatus cuncta principibus solita Vespasiano decernit." A brazen tablet with an inscription, purporting to be a fragment of this very decree, is still shown at Rome (see chap. xxxi. vol. iii. p. 468.), but its genuineness is disputed. Orelli does not admit it into his collection. The technical language is no doubt occasionally inaccurate for the time of Vespasian, but it may be regarded as drawn up in the phraseology of an earlier period. Of its external marks of authenticity, I have met with no account, except that Niebuhr declares that the mere inspection ought to satisfy an intelligent inquirer in its favour. *Rom. Hist.* i. 343. note 860. The tenor of the decree is to confer on the new emperor all the executive authority possessed by Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius, before him. If it bestowed special offices and titles, these must have been enumerated in the earlier part of the document, which is wanting.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 5, 6.

that the national temple should be rebuilt by the nation, and Vespasian be asked to assist the good work as the first of the citizens, rather than suffered himself to undertake it in their name; a motion which the senate timidly passed over in silence. The same man, a noted disciple of the Stoics, and already conspicuous for his fearlessness, menaced the delators of the late reigns with prosecution. When, before the close of this busy sitting, a deputation was proposed from the senate to Vespasian, he insisted that the magistrates should appoint the members of it by open vote, choosing on oath those whom they deemed most honourable and best affected to the new settlement of affairs: but such a proceeding, it was felt, would fix a stigma on the bad or suspected, and, after a sharp debate, the courtiers of the late emperors carried the appointment by ballot.[1]

Strong measures of Mucianus in the city.

The efforts of the sterner patriots to bring the culprits of the late reigns to justice, as the only way in which they could proclaim their own principles, caused much agitation in the ranks of the nobles, and, coupled with the suppressed irritation of the conquered and the licentious violence of the conquerors, threatened a fresh crisis in the city. The speedy entry of Mucianus within the walls was felt as a relief, and there was a general disposition to appeal to his decision, and sanction all his measures. He began by imposing restraint on Primus and Varus, and making them feel that they had found a master. All eyes were immediately turned towards him; courtiers and senators thronged anxiously around him. He paraded the streets at the head of his armed bands, checked licence with a strong hand, and disposed at his will of the houses and gardens which had become for a moment the

[1] Tac. *l. c.*: "Eo Senatus die quo de imperio Vespasiani censebant." The whole of these proceedings were the work of a single day.

prey of the most audacious plunderer. Leaving still to Vespasian the title of emperor, he seized on all the power, and treated even the son of Vespasian as his subaltern. With cruel precaution, he commanded the death of Galerianus, the son of the unfortunate Piso, Galba's colleague for a week, as a possible pretender to the empire; and he was gratified with the suicide of Priscus, the Vitellian prefect of the prætorians, who killed himself from shame and mortification. Asiaticus, the freedman and favourite of the late emperor, was degraded to a slave's death on the cross.[1]

On the 1st of January, 823, ten days after the death of Vitellius, affairs in the city seemed to resume their usual course with the appointment of Vespasian and Titus to the consulship; though the occurrence of stormy weather, which kept the corn-fleets of Africa out at sea, alarmed the people, and caused rumours of a revolt in that important province. Domitian was raised to the prætorship, and he filled ostensibly the first place in the administration; but he was indolent and dissolute, and abandoned himself to intrigue and debauchery. While this young prince's name was affixed to every edict and appointment, the real power in all essential matters remained in the hands of Mucianus. The interests of Vespasian were secured by a general change in the magistracy, both at home and in the provinces, and the emperor is said to have thanked Domitian ironically for not superseding him in his eastern command.[2] Mucianus was not less intent on breaking down the influence of Primus and Varus: he withdrew their best legions from their command, and these he dismissed to the

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 11. For the splendid fortunes of Asiaticus, see Tac. *Hist.* ii. 95.: "Nondum quartus a victoria mensis, et libertus Vitellii Asiaticus, Polycletos, Patrobios, et vetera odiorum nomina æquabat." For his infamous compliances, such as popular rumour described them, Suet. *Vitell.* 12.

[2] Dion, lxvi. 2.

Syrian or German frontier. His utmost vigilance was still required to allay the animosities which were repeatedly breaking out among the soldiers of so many generals in the city, and not less to satisfy the demands excited by their reckless promises. A prætorian guard was embodied from among the most clamorous of every army, and many who coveted the pay and indulgences of their favoured service were with difficulty appeased with honours and donatives. The necessities of the government demanded an aid of sixty millions of sesterces, which it was proposed to exact by a forced loan from the citizens; but the decree for raising it was not put in execution. It was used perhaps only as a menace, the dread of which stimulated the people to rally round the government. As Mucianus grew stronger, his acts became more and more vigorous. The consulships promised by L. Vitellius were formally withdrawn from his nominees and given to trusty friends of the victor, and the remains of the martyred Sabinus were honoured with a public funeral. The murder of L. Piso, a cousin of Galerianus, might seem to confirm the power of the new dynasty by removing another collateral pretender; but it affected it with a deep stain. This indeed was not the act of Vespasian, nor even of Mucianus, but of Piso's colleague in the government of Africa, who tried first to engage him in a revolt, and, when baffled by his unambitious modesty, accused him falsely of the attempt, and raised an armed force to despatch him.[1]

Many a herald of victory, eager for reward, had crossed the seas during the winter, to be the first to greet Vespasian with the tidings of his success. They had found him in his quarters at Alexandria, arranging, on the one hand, the plan of his son's operations in Judea, preparing, on the other, for his own descent

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 39. 47. 50.

upon Italy, as soon as the season should admit of embarking his troops. While his fortunes were yet dubious, such had been the anticipation of his success, that Vologesus offered him forty thousand horsemen for the campaign; and it was considered the height of good fortune in a Roman general to have received such an offer from the national enemy, and to be in a condition to refuse it.[1] The Parthian monarch was desired to tender his alliance to the senate, and informed that peace was already restored to Rome by the hands of the Romans themselves. But, amidst his triumphs, Vespasian heard with vexation of the vices of Domitian, which were throwing a shade over the opening promise of his principate. He seems to have been early apprised that the young man was aiming, vaguely and frivolously indeed, on seizing the empire for himself; and though it was clear that he had neither abilities nor influence for such an undertaking, that he should merely harbour the thought was distressing alike to the prince and to the father. Titus, to whom he now finally committed the conduct of the Jewish war, interceded, before leaving him, for his erring brother, venturing to remind him that friends might be changed with circumstances, but that kinsmen must always remain such, and to warn him that the brothers would not long continue united, if their sire set them the example of disregarding the ties of blood. Vespasian promised to watch over the common interests of his house, and dismissed him to the great struggle which was to make him illustrious among Roman generals. He urged forward the despatch of corn-vessels from Egypt; for Rome was suffering from scarcity. When the ships arrived with their freight, only ten days'

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 51.; Suet. *Vesp.* 6. But a few years before, Lucan had expressed the deepest disgust at the intention imputed to Pompeius of seeking aid from Parthia. "Quid Parthos transire doces?" *Phars.* viii. 331. foll.

consumption of grain remained, it was said, in the city.[1]

Foundation of the new Capitol.

With the return of abundance and tranquillity, the first care of the senate was to commence the restoration of the Capitol; for while the temple of Jupiter lay in ruins the fortunes of the empire seemed to suffer an eclipse. This pious work was entrusted, according to ancient precedent, to one of the most respected of the citizens, by name L. Vestinus, who, though only of knightly family, was equal in personal repute to any of the senators.[2] The Haruspices, whom he consulted, demanded that the ruins of the fallen building should be conveyed away, and cast into the lowest places of the city, and the new temple erected precisely on the old foundations; for the gods, they declared, would have no change made in the form of their familiar dwelling. On the 20th June, being a fair and cloudless day, the area of the temple precincts was encircled with a string of fillets and chaplets. Soldiers, chosen for their auspicious names, were marched into it, bearing boughs of the most auspicious trees; and the Vestals, attended by a troop of boys and girls, both whose parents were living, sprinkled it with water drawn from bubbling founts or running streamlets. Then, preceded by the pontiffs, the prætor Helvidius stalking round, sanctified the space with the mystical washing of sow's, sheep's, and bull's blood, and placed their entrails on a grassy altar. This done, he invoked Jove, Juno, and Minerva, and all the patrons of the empire, to prosper the undertaking, and raise by divine assistance their temple,

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 52.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 53.: "Equestris ordinis virum, sed auctoritate famaque inter proceres." Of the man who obtained this unusual honour strangely enough nothing whatever is known. An Atticus Vestinus is mentioned as consul in 818, and suffering under Nero, *Ann.* xv. 69., but the gens is not known of either, nor whether there was any connexion between them. Comp. Martial, iv. 72.

founded by the piety of men. Then he touched with his hand the connected fillets, and the magistrates, the priests, the senators, the knights, with a number of the people, lent their strength to draw a great stone to the spot where the building was to commence.[1] Beneath it they laid pieces of gold and silver money, minted for the occasion, as well as of unwrought ore; for the Haruspices forbade either stone or metal to be used which had been employed before for profane purposes. The temple rose from the deep substructions of Tarquinius exactly, as was required, on the plan of its predecessor. Formerly, when this fane was restored under Catulus, it was wished to give greater effect to the cell by placing it on a flight of steps; and it was proposed, not to heighten the building itself, which the Haruspices forbade, but to lower the platform before it. But this platform was itself the roof of a labyrinth of vaults and galleries, used for offices and storerooms, and the expedient was pronounced impracticable. Vespasian, more fortunate than his predecessor, obtained permission to raise the elevation of the edifice, which now, perhaps for the first time, was allowed to overtop the colonnades around it, and to fling its broad bulk athwart the *templum* of the southern sky, in which the auspices were taken from the neighbouring summit of the Arx.[2]

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 53. The ruins of the old building were removed to the foundations, and carted into the low grounds at the foot of the hill. "Haruspices monuere ut reliquiæ prioris delubri in paludes avehcrentur."

[2] Tac. *l.c.*: "Altitudo ædibus adjecta: id solum religio adnuere: et prioris templi magnificentiæ defuisse creditum." For the story about Catulus see Gellius, ii. 10. The *templum*, in the augural sense, was the southern half of the heavens, as observed from the Auguraculum, a spot on the northern summit of the hill. This summit is thirty feet higher than the Tarpeian, and may possibly have commanded a clear view, as was technically required, over the roof of the Capitoline temple. It seems not improbable that the difficulty about elevating the temple arose from the objection to its cutting the

In the eyes of the citizens one thing alone might seem wanting on this occasion to their prince's glory, that he should himself be present at the solemnity, and conduct it in person. So natural was it, indeed, to suppose him there, taking the part of an Augustus or a Claudius in the expiation of his country's sins, that it came to be commonly believed that he was actually present, and such is the assertion of some writers of authority.[1] Yet the circumstantial account of Tacitus proves clearly that this was not the case, and the discrepancy is worth noting from the hint it gives us of the causes which have helped to obscure the truth of facts at this period. Vespasian was already assuming in the eyes of the Romans something of the divine character: the Flavian race was beginning to supplant the Julian in their imagination; or rather what was wanting to the imagination was supplied by the spirit of flattery, which represented the hero himself and all that concerned him in factitious colours.[2] It began to be affirmed that the marvellous rise of the Sabine veteran had been signified long before by no doubtful omens at home; a Jewish captive, the historian Josephus, had prophetically saluted him as emperor[3]; the *common* and *constant belief* of the Jews, that from the midst of them should spring a ruler of the world, was declared to have received in this event its glorious consummation. But while the Romans were thus surrounding the object of their

The Flavian family begins to be regarded with superstitious reverence.

horizon, which it required the good fortune of a Vespasian to overcome.

[1] Suet. *Vesp.* 8.; Dion, lxvi. 10.

[2] Suet. *Vesp.* 7.: "Auctoritas et quasi majestas quædam inopinato et adhuc novo principi deerat: hæc quoque accessit." Sil. Ital. iii. 594.:

"Exin se Curibus virtus cœlestis ad astra
Efferet, et sacris augebit nomen Iulis
Bellatrix gens baccifero nutrita Sabino."

[3] Suet. *Vespas.* 5.; Joseph. *B. J.* iii. 8, 9. Comp. Tac. *Hist.* ii. 78.: "Recursabant animo vetera omina," et seqq.

reverence with the halo of sanctity, the Orientals had ventured to invest him with attributes more palpably divine. At Alexandria a blind man, one well known as such, so it is pretended, in the city, had thrown himself at his feet, and implored him to touch his eyes with spittle; a cripple had entreated him to plant his heel upon him. Both declared that their god Serapis had assured them of the new demigod's power to heal their infirmities. Vespasian, as a blunt soldier, was inclined to laugh at these importunities, but his flatterers urged him to make trial of his growing divinity, and his physicians at the same time encouraged him to believe that the suppliants were only partially blind or lame, and possibly his operation in the way prescribed might have some natural efficacy. At all events, they added, he might gain in reputation by success, while he could not lose by failure. Vespasian, half cynical, half superstitious, put forth his hand and his foot, and when the blind saw and the lame walked, allowed himself easily to be deceived by one of the grossest impostures recorded in sober history. He conceived an immense admiration for the god who had so justly measured his extraordinary powers, and when he went to consult him in his temple at Alexandria, the priests took care to confirm this devotion by fresh omens of impending greatness.[1]

Miraculous cures ascribed to Vespasian at Alexandria.

Vespasian, however, had not loitered on his way to empire in quest of oracles to assure him of it. He had been detained through the spring of 823 by north-west winds, which prevented navigation at that season, and it was not till the end of May that he was able to put to sea and direct his course towards Italy.[2] Had he

Vespasian quits Egypt, and reaches Rome in the summer of 823.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 81, 82.; Suet. *Vespas.* 7.; Dion, lxvi. 8.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 81.: "Æstivis flatibus certa maria incipiunt vi. kal. Jun. (die xxvii. Mai) et desinunt viii. kal. Oct. (die xiv. Sept.)," Brotier. in loc.

sailed direct to Rome he might yet have reached his destination in time to share in the ceremony on the Capitoline; but reasons of state which have not been explained to us may have determined him to advance more leisurely, and to visit the various spots in Asia and Greece at which vessels usually touched on their way westward.[1] It seems clear that he was not anxious to get quickly to Rome. Possibly he wished his affairs to be well established by Mucianus before his own arrival, and the odium which might attach to the first necessary severities to be partly dissipated. Among these was the execution of the son of Vitellius, whom Mucianus had sacrificed to the interests of the new dynasty. The same minister had set himself sternly against the claims of Antonius Primus to the emperor's special confidence. He would not suffer Domitian to retain him among his companions, and had driven him to leave Italy, and represent to Vespasian in person his merits and their requital. But the letters of Mucianus effectually counteracted the influence he might hope to exercise by personal application. The emperor regarded him with jealousy, and was fully persuaded on the testimony of many friends, that his arrogance was unpopular among the citizens, as well as dangerous to the stability of the government.[2] If he continued, however, to treat Primus with outward respect, it was perhaps from the apprehensions he could not wholly discard of his own minister. While the affairs of the new dynasty at Rome seemed to be settled firmly, and the capital itself lay prostrate from its exertions and sufferings during two years of agitation, such as it had not experienced since the days of Marius and Sulla, its position in the provinces was by no means equally

[1] Joseph. *B. J.* vii. 2. 1.: εἰς Ῥόδον διέβαινε· ἐντεῦθεν . . . πᾶσας τὰς ἐν τῷ παράπλῳ πόλεις ἐπελθὼν.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 80.

secure. The services of Mucianus were again put in requisition to stay the defection of a great army in Gaul; but his authority, which threatened to become too great for a subject, was soon happily balanced by the exploits of the heir to the empire in Judea.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Revolts in the provinces: the North-West.—Claudius Civilis, under pretence of siding with Vespasian, intrigues for the subversion of the Roman power on the Rhine.—Critical state of the legions, the auxiliaries, and the province.—Disasters to the Roman arms.—Civilis besieges the Roman station of Vetera.—Mutiny among the legionaries.—Slaughter of their general and dissolution of their forces.—Triumphant expectations of a Gallo-German empire.—Capitulation and massacre of the garrison of Vetera.—Movement of the Flavian chiefs for the recovery of the province.—Campaign of Cerialis, and defeat of Civilis.—Gradual suppression of the revolt and submission of Civilis.—Story of Julius Sabinus, and final pacification of Gaul. (A. D. 69, 70. A. U. 822, 823.)

Formidable revolts in the provinces.

THE Romans, it will be remembered, did not turn their arms against one another in the greatest of their civil wars, till Cæsar had reduced the West and Pompeius the East to entire submission. During the twenty years of the struggle between the senate and the people the provinces lay in perfect repose. While the blood of their conquerors was flowing in torrents, while their garrisons were withdrawn from the frontiers to the heart of the empire, while the commonwealth itself lay prostrate with exhaustion, the conquered made no effort to regain their independence; even the nations beyond the border looked on in silent amazement. Far different was the condition of the Roman state when the fears, the indignation, or the selfish ambition of Galba, and Galba's rivals and successors, once more marshalled the legions in mutual conflict. At either extremity of their wide dominions, in the north-west and the south-east, there arose at this period formidable revolts against the rulers of the nations; nor were they repressed without the employment of great

military resources and the effusion of much Roman blood. The wars I have now to relate are interesting—one of them most deeply so—in their character and results, and it will be important to observe the pertinacity with which the conquerors still maintained their attitude in the face of their foreign subjects, at a moment when all their energies seemed tasked to keep erect the frame of their government at home.

Civilis, the chief of the Batavi, resents his injurious treatment by the Romans.

The country of the Batavi, the island between the channels of the Wahal and the Old Rhine, scarce rose above the surrounding waters; the beds of its broad rivers had not been raised by the Alpine débris which have strewn them for eighteen ages since; but neither had its plains been protected from sea and land floods by lines of artificial embankment. A natural delta like that of the Nile or Ganges at the present day, intersected with innumerable channels, streaked with lakes and stagnant pools, covered with rank grasses and tangled brushwood, formed the strip of neutral land which the Romans allowed to intervene between their province and the lair of yet untrodden barbarism. This wilderness was perhaps too difficult to conquer, too inhospitable to colonize; but, on the other hand, the wants of its inhabitants, who depended for everything but meat and fish upon their more civilized neighbours, rendered them amenable in some degree to Roman influence; nor did they refuse to acknowledge their dependence by serving the Roman government with their arms and paying it a nominal tribute. The Batavi, an offshoot of the great nation of the Chatti, were a tribe of horsemen, and their gallantry in the field and skill in riding and swimming on horseback, made them useful auxiliaries in the German campaigns. One of the most conspicuous of their chiefs at this period was Claudius Civilis, whose name seems to indicate that he had

attached himself as a client to the imperial family, and perhaps attained the distinction of Roman citizenship.[1] This man now commanded a cohort of his native cavalry in the service of Rome; but a brother named Julius Paulus had been beheaded for some act of insubordination, and Civilis himself transported to Italy, and cast into a dungeon there, in the latter days of Nero. Galba, however, had released and sent him home, where the legions, indignant at such favour accorded to a rebel, again demanded his punishment, and he was only saved by the policy of Vitellius, afraid, it would seem, of irritating a restless ally in the rear of his base of operations. But the Batavian was already beyond the power of soothing: he saw the Romans intent only on mutual slaughter; he beheld the garrisons of the Rhenish frontier moving, by troops and battalions, southward; he felt from his own haughty indignation that the name of Rome was odious to Gauls and Germans alike; and he burned to employ the skill and conduct learnt in the camps of the conquerors, for the subversion of their power, and the revenge of public and private wrongs.

Reduced strength of the legions. Dissatisfaction of the Belgic tribes.

The moment for this revolt was sagaciously chosen. The strength of the Germanic legions had been drained off into Italy, and though we shall still meet with the names of the First, the Fifth, the Fifteenth, and the Sixteenth in the Lower, and of the Fourth, the Thirteenth, and the Eighteenth in the Upper Province, we must regard these as mere skeleton battalions, denuded of their best men and most experienced officers.[2] More-

[1] Civilis is called Julius, Tac. *Hist.* i. 59., but Claudius, iv. 13. I have adopted the name most commonly given to him by modern writers. The Claudian emperors were themselves sometimes designated as Julii, from the house into which they were adopted.

[2] Comp. Tac. *Hist.* i. 55. 59., iv. 24. The history of the disposition of the Roman legions, during the three centuries that we have traces of it, is one of the most intricate problems of antiquity. Marquardt (in Becker's *Handbuch*, iii. 2. 352.) has treated the subject

over, Galba had been obliged to buy the support of the Roman residents in Gaul by the establishment of a new colony, Augusta of the Treviri on the Moselle, at the expense of the native landowners; and not among the Treviri only, but throughout the Belgic tribes, deep dissatisfaction had been created by the exactions with which he had pampered his ill-disciplined armies and replenished his empty treasuries.[1] The spirit, indeed, of the unarmed provincials was too thoroughly cowed by the terror of the Roman name, or their strength too much broken by the constant drafts made on their youth for distant service, to allow them to rush into the field against their masters; but we may believe that they were prompt in aiding their revolted compatriots with supplies and secret information.

Civilis spreads disaffection among the Gaulish states.

The man who flung this bold defiance at the conquerors, ventured, it was said, to compare himself with Hannibal and Sertorius, who both like him aspired to overthrow the Romans by the arms of their own subjects, and both like him were disfigured by the loss of an eye.[2] Hannibal crossed the Alps to bring succour to the

elaborately: he refers, however, sometimes to critics whom I have not been able to consult, and I do not always comprehend his processes. The reader must remember that the skeleton or depôt of a legion, the strength of which was drafted off to a distance, might still retain its name in its original quarters. Sometimes in such cases the legion was split into two, and the supplemental division received a distinguishing title, such as Gemina. According to the arrangement of Augustus, there should have been four legions in the Upper and the same number in the Lower Germania; thus we find in the year 767 legions ii., xiii., xiv., xvi. in the one, and i., v., xx., xxi. in the other. (Tac. *Ann.* i. 37.) Of these, ii. and xiv. had been transferred to Britain, and replaced by iv. and xv. The xx. and xxi. have disappeared, and instead of them we find the xviii. only.

[1] The date of the Roman colony at Augusta Trevirorum can only be fixed approximately. Steininger (*Gesch. der Trevirer*, p. 83.) ascribes the foundation, with great probability, to Galba, referring to the statement of Tacitus, *Hist.* i. 53. Comp. Suet. *Galb.* 12.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 13.: "Sertorium se aut Hannibalem ferens, simili oris dehonestamento."

Gauls and Samnites; Sertorius brought the guerillas of Spain to support the cause of the Marians at Rome. Civilis, at the instance of Antonius Primus, pretended to raise Vespasian's standard against the forces of Vitellius on the Rhine, but among the trustiest of his own associates he had already thrown off the mask. He had summoned the chiefs of the Batavian and kindred tribes to a national banquet in the solitude of a sacred grove. He had excited them to the utmost with wine and clamour, and inflamed their passions by appeals to their fear, hatred, and revenge. The name of the old national religion was invoked. Sacrifices were performed, oaths were interchanged and ratified by savage rites, such as their masters had proscribed, and vainly endeavoured to suppress. The Frisians, to the north of the Rhine, and the Caninefates, who occupied a portion of the island, joined in the projected insurrection, and were the first to rise. With a prompt and bold movement they dislodged the slender battalions stationed within their territories, and destroyed or captured the flotilla which secured the passage and navigation of the river. As soon as a national standard was raised, several squadrons of German and Gallic horse went over from the Roman camps; but the chiefs of the legions were in fact well-disposed towards Vespasian, and while they made this outbreak a pretext for retaining their troops in Gaul, in spite of the urgent summons of Vitellius, who was now calling for every man and horse for service in Italy, they were in no haste to crush a movement which still bore at least the name of a diversion in favour of his rival. A few precious moments were thus gained to the insurgents. Civilis felt himself strong enough to avow his real objects. He dismissed his Gaulish prisoners, with injunctions to raise their friends and kinsmen for the liberty of Gaul, and proclaimed openly that the dominion of Rome was about

to pass away, when the arms of the provincials, so long employed against their own independence, were raised once more in the cause of right and of nature.[1] A mutiny of the auxiliaries had never yet occurred in the Roman camps; such had been the good fortune, or such the dexterous policy, of the imperators. When at last it came, it took the Romans completely by surprise, and never certainly were they less prepared, either in material or moral resources, to confront it. It was the policy of these conquerors, such at least as we can trace it at a later period, to employ on each frontier auxiliary battalions drawn from distant provinces rather than from the immediate neighbourhood. On the Rhine, however, the aggressive operations of Germanicus and Corbulo had caused a rapid consumption of new levies, and it was necessary perhaps to furnish the legions with an unusual proportion of native recruits. But these armies had now for some years been confined within their lines; the soldiers, Roman or Gallo-German, were not actively employed: the consequence had been a general relaxation of discipline among both classes, and the auxiliaries more particularly had become, we may suppose, dissatisfied in the consciousness of their real strength, and the inferiority of their position. Many circumstances had contributed to abate their respect for their masters. The officers had grown old in this distant service, and exercised their authority with feeble hands; the central government itself, impoverished by the extravagance of the Cæsars, no longer maintained its administration with its ancient vigour and precision on the frontiers, while the knowledge widely spread of the confusion which reigned in Italy created a general feeling of restlessness and expectation of change throughout the provinces.

Threatened mutiny of the auxiliaries.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 17.

Conscious of these elements of danger, Hordeonius Flaccus, the commander of the Upper province, who had been left with the chief authority over all the forces of the empire in those regions, apprehended at once the full peril of the crisis. While still halting between the two Roman factions which divided his camps, he saw that the blow impending was aimed equally at both, and though he had at first given some countenance to Civilis, as a presumed Flavian partisan, he was now anxious to crush the rebel, whatever might be the service he should thus be doing to Vitellian interests. From his head-quarters, placed, we may suppose, at Moguntiacum, he directed Mummius Lupercus, at the head of two legions, in the Lower province, to cross the Wahal, and give the insurgents battle in the heart of their island.[1] Lupercus was not wanting in energy; he effected the passage of the river; but while his right wing was flanked by the lukewarm battalions of the Ubii and Treviri, he incautiously allowed his left to be guarded by a detachment of Batavian horse, who accompanied him with the deliberate intention of deserting in the

Civilis defeats a Roman force in the island of the Batavi.

[1] Moguntiacum (Maintz) was the capital of the Upper Germania. The frontier of the two German provinces (so called from the numbers of that people transplanted into them from the right bank of the Rhine) has been variously drawn. A recent critic (Böcking, on *Not. Dign.* ii. 483.) has fixed it to the river Nahe (Nava), which enters the Rhine just below Bingen. See also Marquardt, in Becker's *Handbuch*, iii. 1. 91. The Nava was still an important landmark in the fourth century. Comp. Ausonius, *Mosell*, 1.:

"Transieram celerem nebuloso flumine Navam . . ."

I step aside to show, in the lines that follow, how much poetical feeling lingered even at that time among the imitators of the antique literature. We, children of the mist, may sympathize with the admiration felt by a stranger from the Atlantic coast for the dry and clear atmosphere of the Rhine valley:

"Purior hic campis aer, Phœbusque sereno
Lumine purpureum reserat jam sudus Olympum. . . .
Sed liquidum jubar, et rutilam visentibus æthram,
Libera perspicui non invidet aura diei."

midst of his first engagement. Civilis, who seems to have purposely allowed his assailant to get into the island, came forward with alacrity to the encounter. The Ubii and Treviri fled at the first shock: the Romans were unable to hold their ground, but they managed to recross the river in decent order, and throw themselves into the fortified camp of Castro Vetera, one of the military stations which Drusus had planted on the Lower Rhine.[1] The Batavians went over to him at the critical moment.

Further disasters of the Romans.

This check was rapidly followed by another disaster. Eight Batavian cohorts had been summoned to Rome by Vitellius, and were already far advanced on their march through Gaul, when a courier from Civilis overtook them with pressing solicitations to join the cause of national independence. Their part was at once decided; but, in order to veil their disaffection, and secure the means of reaching their armed countrymen in the North, they refused to move further to the southward, under pretence of requiring certain gratifications promised them, as they alleged, by Vitellius. Hordeonius, anxious and perplexed, granted at once what they demanded; but they immediately raised their demands, till they knew they could not be conceded. Refused, they openly declared that they would join Civilis at all hazards, confiding, perhaps, in the signs of weakness manifested by their commander. Hordeonius was, indeed, at a loss what course to take. At first he proposed to employ force, and march against them; again he shut himself up in his camp, and would have let things take their course. His officers

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 18. Castra Vetera is supposed to be Xanten near Cleves. "Great quantities of Roman remains have been dug out on that spot." Greenwood, *Hist. of the Germans*, i. 150., from Cluverius, *Germ. Ant.* p. 412.

urged, and almost compelled him to act, and at last he ordered Herennius Gallus, legate of the First legion, to close the road northward at Bonna, where he was stationed. At the same time he announced that he was about to follow the revolted squadrons in person, and co-operate with Gallus in crushing them between the two divisions of his army. Once more, however, the prefect abandoned his bolder counsels: the Batavians approaching Bonna sent to parley with Gallus, who deserted by his chief, hesitated to interpose. Nevertheless his legion rushed forward to the combat, and might have overpowered the advancing Batavians, but for the defection of their Belgic auxiliaries. A third Roman force was thus beaten with disgrace, and driven behind its ramparts. Passing rapidly before the encampment, and leaving the Colonia Agrippinensis on their right, the victorious Batavians pressed resolutely forward, and with no further check, effected a junction with the battalions of Civilis.[1]

Civilis beleaguers the Roman station of Castra Vetera.

The forces of the Gaulish champion now assumed the proportions of a regular army; but though the liberty of Gaul and Germany was the common watchword of the confederates, he still chose to represent himself, in parley with the Romans, as a partisan of Vespasian.[2] He invited the legions of Vetera to take the oath to the same imperator to whom, as he declared, he had sworn his own auxiliary detachments. But the Romans under Lupercus were faithful to Vitellius: they replied to the summons of the Batavians with indignant menaces, repaired their defences, and awaited the onset of his barbarians. They destroyed the town which had grown up beneath the walls of their encampment; they stored their quarters with

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 19, 20.
[2] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 21.: "Civilis, justi jam exercitus ductor, sed consilii ambiguus . . . cunctos in verba Vespasiani adigit."

provisions pillaged from the country round, and resorted to all the means of military science to repel the attack of an enemy, well armed, well trained, and ably handled. The rebels assailed, the legionaries defended the camp, with equal skill and obstinacy, but while anxiously expecting aid from their general, the Romans succeeded in maintaining their fortified position. One legion, indeed, the Eighteenth, was despatched from the Upper province under Dillius Vocula; but Hordeonius still hesitated to put himself in motion. His own soldiers grew impatient, indignant, insubordinate. Letters reached him from Vespasian, inviting him to join his faction; but uproar spread through the ranks, and he could only read them in public in order to reject and condemn them, and send the courier who had brought them in chains to Vitellius.[2]

Mutinous riots among the Roman soldiery.

Active operations were necessary to confirm this pretence of zeal. Hordeonius began at last to march. At Bonna he was met by the reproaches of the defeated legionaries, who ascribed their disaster to his inactivity, or even to his bad faith. In reply, he recited the letters he had written to all parts of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, demanding assistance; and, to prove his authority, caused one of the murmurers to be put under arrest. From Bonna he proceeded to Colonia, the appointed rendezvous of the auxiliaries he had summoned to the standards of Vitellius. But the soldiers, full of ardour themselves, were disgusted with the weakness or treachery of their leader, and compelled him to relinquish the command to Vocula, whose promptness and fidelity seemed equally beyond question. This insubordination, however, as usual, was the harbinger of ill-success. The Roman forces, as they advanced towards Vetera, were harassed by scarce-

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 21—24.

ness of provisions; their pay was irregular; the distant states of Gaul were slack in remitting to them the men and money they required; the waters of the Rhine fell so low that their vessels could with difficulty continue their route down the stream, and the terrors of superstition, which beheld in this drought the anger of the gods, aggravated the hardships of their situation. Vocula now joined his forces to the Thirteenth legion at Novesium; but not feeling himself sufficiently strong to attempt the relief of Vetera, he employed and sought to animate his men with camp-exercises, and by the plunder of the Gugerni, who had taken part with Civilis. The hostile Germans were watching these proceedings from the other side of the Rhine. A vessel laden with corn happened to take ground in the shallow channel, and they prepared to bring it over to their own bank. Gallus who had been left in camp at Gelduba, while Vocula was engaged in his foray, observing this movement, sent a cohort to prevent it. The Germans received succours, and a skirmish ensued, in which they gained the advantage, and succeeded in carrying off their prize. The beaten legionaries imputed ill-faith to their commanders; they dragged Gallus out of his tent, tore his robes, and struck him with many blows, demanding what price he had received for his treachery, and who were his associates in it. Thence they turned upon Hordeonius, who still remained, though divested of authority, in the camp, and threw him into chains, from which he was not released till Vocula's return. This chief had the power to restore obedience. He put the ringleaders in the mutiny to death. Such was the rapid change of feeling among the soldiers; so easily were they excited to sedition, so promptly restored to the instinct of military submission. While, in fact, the officers were for the most part well disposed towards Vespasian, as a brave and able

captain, whose reputation pronounced him worthy of leading them, the men were generally attached to Vitellius, whom they knew, and liked perhaps for his largesses or his remiss discipline. But as long as they could be made to believe that their chiefs were faithful to this favourite, they consented to execute their orders and endure their chastisements.[1]

The siege of Vetera turned into a blockade.

The great mass of the German tribes, on either side of the Rhine, now attached themselves to the fortunes of Civilis; and a general attack was made, by his direction, upon the unfortunate Ubii, whose long fidelity to the Romans rendered them hateful to their less pliant compatriots. Their country between the Rohr and the Rhine—from Juliers to Bingen—was ravaged with fire and sword, except where it was under the immediate protection of the Roman garrisons; but the strong defences of Colonia defied the fury of the barbarians, and Civilis now collected all his energies for pressing the siege of Vetera, which he had kept throughout under strict blockade. The Batavians were charged with the service of the battering machines: the Germans from the right bank, more impetuous, and whose lives were held perhaps cheaper, were destined for the assault on the entrenchments. A furious attack was made; but the defence was steadily maintained, and through the darkness of the night, illumined only by the glare of torches and blazing ruins, both parties exhausted every effort of skill and bravery, till the despair rather than the science of the Romans gained the ascendancy. Civilis resumed the blockade, and contented himself with attempts to corrupt the enemy who had baffled his arms.[2]

Such was the posture of affairs on the banks of the Rhine, when, late in the autumn, accounts arrived

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 25—27.
[2] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 30.

of the defeat of the Vitellians at Cremona, the proclamation of Vespasian by Primus, and the invitation of Cæcina to the remnant of the beaten party to accede to this change of government. Hordeonius once more took upon himself to play the part of general, and required his legions to swear to the new Imperator. The Gaulish auxiliaries, indifferent, in truth, to either chief, made no difficulty in obeying, but the legionaries still hesitated. At last, when constrained to acquiesce, they pronounced the oath slowly and reluctantly, and slurred over the name of Vespasian with indistinct murmurs. From the Roman camps the envoys of Primus passed to the lines of Civilis, and claimed him as their master's avowed ally. The Batavian replied at first evasively; but the envoys were themselves Gauls, and he was emboldened, on further intercourse, to open to them the real object of the armed attitude he had assumed, recounting the sufferings and indignities he had undergone, and invoking them to join him in delivering their common country from the tyranny of the stranger. Their fate, he said, could not become worse than it already was; victory might restore them to liberty. With this he dismissed them, having succeeded, it would seem, in shaking their fidelity, and at least disposed them to conceal his own avowed hostility.[1]

Envoys sent to Civilis on the part of Vespasian.

Trusting that Vocula would be thrown off his guard by the false report of these emissaries, the Batavian now prepared to strike a furious blow. Still keeping watch in person before Vetera, he detached a body of picked troops, who, after surprising a Roman squadron in its quarters at Asciburgium, presented themselves before the camp so suddenly that Vocula had not time to make the usual address to his men, nor even

He makes a sudden attack on the Romans.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 32.

to draw them out in battle array.[1] In such emergencies the Roman tactics allowed of but one manœuvre; the legionaries were mustered rapidly in the centre, the auxiliaries hastened to occupy the space on their flanks. From between the ranks of these ill-formed battalions the cavalry charged the foe; but the Germans received them with steady valour, and drove them back on their own lines. The Romans were shaken by the rebound, and cut down by the advancing Germans with great slaughter: at the same moment the Nervian cohorts went over to their countrymen, and left one flank of the legionaries unprotected. Assailed on two sides, the troops of Vocula broke and fled, leaving their colours behind them, and were chased to their entrenchments. The day would have ended in the destruction of the routed army, but for the arrival of some cohorts of Vascon auxiliaries, whose slender strength was unknown to the excited victors, and whom they supposed to be the van of a long column from Novesium or Moguntiacum. The Germans were ultimately driven back, with the sacrifice of their most forward warriors; but their horsemen carried off the standards and captives. The Romans lost the greater number in the action, but the Germans lost their best men.[2]

Success of the Romans, and momentary relief of Vetera.

Civilis and Vocula had both made mistakes. The one ought to have supported so daring an attack with a larger force, in which case the appearance of a few auxiliaries would not have turned the fortune of the day: the negligence of the other, and the ease with which he had suffered himself to be deceived by imperfect information, were unpardonable; nor did he now take advantage of his assailant's discouragement to raise

[1] Asciburgium, perhaps the modern Asburg, between Neus and Xanten (Novesium and Vetera). Smith's *Dict. of Class. Geog.*
[2] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 33.

the blockade of Vetera. Civilis had notified to the besieged that he had gained a great victory: they might the more readily believe him when they saw the captives and the standards he paraded before their walls. But one of the prisoners exclaimed with a loud voice that the Romans were really the conquerors; and though the brave soldier was immediately cut down by his captors, his countrymen took heart from the assurance thus conveyed to them. At the same moment the flames of burning villages betokened the advance of the legions to their relief. Vocula, on arriving at the spot, ordered his men to entrench a camp for their baggage, preparatory to the attack: but they were impatient of labour and eager for the fray, and with menacing cries compelled him to launch them, in loose marching order, upon the enemy. Civilis received them gallantly: he trusted to the blunders of his assailant as much as to his own prowess. The mutinous Romans had lost, indeed, with their discipline no slight portion of their courage. They would have been speedily overpowered; but, at their cry for succour, their besieged comrades poured forth, and the brave Batavian happening to be thrown to the ground by his horse falling, both sides believed him slain. The Germans paused in consternation; the Romans redoubled blow on blow with renewed vigour. Vetera was effectually relieved: but Vocula again neglected to follow up his victory, contenting himself with strengthening the defences now no longer threatened. He was suspected, nor, it is said, unjustly, of a corrupt understanding with the enemy. Though he strengthened the works of Vetera, he drafted a thousand men from the legion which held it, and withdrew his forces successively to Gelduba and Novesium. Want of provisions may have urged him thus to reduce the garrison, for the country was ravaged far and near, and the Germans commanded the stream of the Rhine.

Moreover the baggage and crowds of sick, wounded, and unarmed, who were to be removed to the safer station of Novesium, required a considerable escort; and finally great numbers of the garrison demanded imperiously to be relieved from the hardships they had so long endured within the lines, while those who were left behind complained that they were deserted.[1]

Further mutinies, slaughter of Hordeonius Flaccus, and break-up of a Roman army.

The forces of Civilis closed once more round the devoted entrenchments, while Vocula made the best of his way to Gelduba and Novesium. He gained the advantage in a skirmish of cavalry on the way, but this success did not improve the temper and conduct of his unsteady battalions. When divisions from several legions were united at Novesium, hearing that treasure had been sent to the camp by Vitellius, they combined to demand a donative. Hordeonius consented to surrender the contents of his chest, but only in the name of Vespasian. The soldiers divided the money, ate and drank, filled the camp with uproar, met in crowds at night, and finally, remembering their old grudge against their general, burst into his tent, dragged him from his couch, and slew him. Vocula would have suffered the same fate, had he not escaped in the garb of a slave. Left without a commander the soldiers lost all discipline. They sent some of their officers to implore aid from the Gaulish states; but in the meanwhile the army itself broke up into sections; the men of the Upper Province separated themselves from those of the Lower; both retreated or rather fled in disorder before Civilis, who was hastening to attack them. Some cohorts insisted on replacing the images of Vitellius in the Belgian camps and cities, though Vitellius was now known to be dead. Finally, the men of the First, the Fourth, and the Eighteenth legions, who

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 34, 35.

belonged to the army of the Upper province, put themselves again under Vocula's orders, and allowed him to lead them to the relief of Moguntiacum, which was surrounded by a swarm of Germans from the Mayn and Neckar. That important post was thus saved to the empire. But the barbarians had spread themselves far inland on the left bank of the Rhine, and the Treviri, abandoned by their Roman defenders, were obliged to fight for their own homes, and protect their country with a long line of wall and entrenchment.[1]

Triumphant anticipations of the revolted Gauls.

Had the news of Vitellius' death reached the seat of war a little sooner, the great fortress of Moguntiacum, the firmest stronghold of the Roman power in the North, would in all probability have been lost. When Antonius Primus, a Gaul of Tolosa, standing amid the ruins of the Capitol, proclaimed that the empire had passed away from the puppet of the Rhenish legions, there arose a cry throughout the Transalpine province that Rome's conquering destiny was broken, and the shrine of her invincible gods, which the Gauls, when they burnt the city, had been unable to storm, had fallen by the hands of the Romans themselves. The outposts of the empire on the Danube, it was affirmed, were besieged by the Dacians and Samatians: a great revolt was announced in Britain: the Druids, raising once more their venerable heads, declared that the dominion of the world was passing to the Gauls, to the race whose conquering hordes

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 36, 37.: "Loricam vallumque per fines suos Treviri struxere." The lorica, in this place, as I understand it, a continuous wall running along the ridge of a mound, is well illustrated from Q. Curtius (ix. 4.) by Steininger, *Gesch. der Trevirer*, p. 187.: "Angusta muri corona erat: non pinnæ (battlements) sicut alibi fastigium ejus distinxerant; sed perpetua lorica obducta transitum sepserat." Steininger, however, himself regards the lorica and vallum as distinct lines of fortification, which he traces along the hills on the left side of the Moselle valley, from near Trèves to Andernach.

had peopled Britain, had occupied Spain, had colonized Italy, overrun Greece, and founded states under the shadow of the Caucasus.[1] It was pretended, moreover, that certain Gaulish chiefs, whom Otho had armed against Vitellius, had vowed, should Roman affairs fall hopelessly into confusion, *not to be wanting* to the liberation of their country.[2]

Civilis communicates with disaffected auxiliaries in the Roman camp.

Before the death of Hordeonius Flaccus nothing had occurred to unmask their secret anticipations. But when the legionaries had actually slain their general, when the provincials, abandoned by their protectors, were forced to cling together for their own defence, Civilis felt that his time was come, and began to communicate his views to Classicus, a Gaulish officer commanding a squadron of Treviri. In the conferences between them two other Gauls of distinction took part, Julius Tutor, a Treviran, and Julius Sabinus, a Lingon, who, while conspiring for the independence of Gaul, affected to boast his descent from Julius Cæsar, the bravest of the Romans. These men had frequent meetings at Colonia, but in private, for the Ubii generally retained their fidelity to Rome. They sounded the disposition of the auxiliaries, and of the tribes around them, and pledged themselves to the liberation of their common country, convinced that when once the passes of the Alps were closed against the invader, the Gaulish states might concert among themselves what limits they would set to their power.[3] Then, returning to

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 54.: "Captam olim a Gallis Urbem, sed integra Jovis sede mansisse imperium: fatali nunc igne signum cœlestis iræ datum, et possessionem rerum humanarum Transalpinis gentibus portendi, superstitione vana Druidæ canebant." Tacitus has skilfully brought in this account immediately after his narrative of the destruction of the Capitol.

[2] Tac. *l. c.*: "Pepigisse ne deessent libertati."

[3] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 55.: "Si Alpes præsidiis firmentur, coalita libertate, dispecturas Gallias quem virium suarum terminum velint."

their quarters, they joined as before the standards of Vocula, who now moved again down the Rhine to succour the troops still blockaded at Vetera. They were only watching their opportunity. Suddenly they quitted the ranks with their divisions, and entrenched themselves at a distance. Neither threats nor entreaties could induce them to return. Vocula was not strong enough to enforce obedience, and retired in perplexity to Novesium. Meanwhile the legionaries themselves wavered in their fidelity. The death of Vitellius, the accession of Vespasian, the disorders of the empire, all combined to alarm them; and, Gauls as they were by birth, or Gallicized by their long sojourn on Gaulish soil, they were persuaded to the crime never before conceived by Roman legionaries, of *swearing the oath of the stranger.*[1] Vocula, driven to despair by this defection of his soldiers, was only prevented by his attendants from despatching himself; but his life was shortly taken by the emissaries of Classicus. The officers next to him in command, Numisius and Gallus, were thrown into chains, and carried to the camp of Civilis. Legionaries and auxiliaries united in one body with the host of Germans and Batavians, and all pledged themselves together to the empire of the Gauls.[2] The garrison of Vetera, the remnant of the army of the Lower province, were once more summoned to surrender. Hopeless of relief, reduced in numbers, and driven to extremity by famine, they accepted terms of capitulation. Their lives were promised them, but they were required to swear the Gaulish oath, and surrender their camp to pillage. After this humiliation they were led beyond the

Capitulation and treacherous massacre of the garrison of Vetera.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 57.: "Ut, flagitium incognitum, Romanus exercitus in externa verba juraret."

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 59.: "Juravere, qui aderant, pro imperio Galliarum."

Gaulish lines, still menaced and insulted by their conductors; but at five miles' distance from the scene of their brave defence they were attacked by the faithless foe, and put to the sword. After thus absorbing one Roman army, and utterly destroying another, Civilis cut the long ruddy locks, which he had vowed to let grow untrimmed till he should consummate his vengeance on the enemies of his country.[1]

The Roman power was thus suddenly overthrown along the whole bank of the Rhine; and all the camps and military stations of the legions were destroyed, with the exception of Moguntiacum, and Vindonissa at the entrance of the Helvetian territory, which it seems were still occupied by weak and trembling garrisons. A wing of the captured Sixteenth broke away and took refuge in Moguntiacum; the main body was marched under Gaulish colours to the city of the Treviri, and exhibited to the people in token of the complete victory their champions had obtained for them. The German allies of Civilis urged him to destroy the colony of Agrippina, which they justly regarded as a standing menace to their nation. But to this measure their chief would not consent. From no motive of humanity, it may be presumed, nor to gain a reputation for clemency, but reserving the place for the central stronghold of his own power; for it was observed that he had never himself pronounced, nor suffered his Batavians to pronounce, the oath to the Gaulish empire, and he contemplated putting himself at the head of a confederacy of German tribes on either side of the Rhine. With

Civilis seeks to form a German sovereignty at Colonia Agrippinensis.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 55—61. As in his account of the British insurrection, so in this also, Tacitus is generally reticent as to the atrocities committed, we must presume, by semi-barbarians, with arms in their hands, excited by the superiority suddenly acquired over the people before whom they were used to tremble. He adds, however, here a report that Civilis set up some of his captives for his child to shoot at.

this view he paid court to Veleda, the virgin queen and priestess of the Bructeri, who dwelt aloof in a tower on the Lippe, and whom they were wont to consult and worship with superstitious awe.[1] To her he had sent Lupercus, the choicest of his captives, as a pledge of the triumph she had promised him; slain by his attendants on the way, the Roman general escaped the more solemn sacrifice to which he had probably been destined. Civilis showed no disposition to advance further to pursue or meet the Romans. He was intent on consolidating his authority in the regions his arms had already won. Sabinus, more bold, or more impatient, led his forces into the country of the Sequani; but while affecting to war for the independence of Gaul, he had himself assumed the title of Cæsar, and was surprised to find the people indifferent to what appeared to them a mere change of masters. Tribe was marshalled against tribe, and the result was a victory of the Sequani over the Lingones. Sabinus himself showed neither courage nor conduct. Flying from the field at the first turn of fortune, he made his way to a neighbouring farmhouse, and set it on fire, while he escaped into the woods, to make it appear that he had destroyed himself. The stratagem succeeded; he was supposed to be dead, and soon forgotten by both parties; but we shall presently hear of him again in an affecting story which gives more interest to his name, than, from his character, it deserves.[2]

His deference to the German prophetess Veleda.

Julius Sabinus defeated by the Sequani.

The Flavian generals had not yet drawn breath from the efforts and anxieties of the war in Italy,

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 61. Comp. *Germ.* 8.: "Veledam diu apud plerosque numinis loco habitam." Not Veleda only, but Aurinia, and other women, had been venerated by the superstition of the Germans as goddesses. "Inesse quin etiam sanctum aliquid et providum putant; nec aut consilia earum aspernantur, aut responsa negligunt." Comp. Cæsar, *Bell. Gall.* i. 50.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 61—67.

when they were appalled by the report of so many legions lost and so many provinces revolted in the North. Mucianus may have felt these disasters more bitterly when he reflected that he had himself encouraged Civilis to rise in Vespasian's name against the defenders of the empire, and that the Batavian had only bettered the lesson in perfidy which he had taught him. But this was not a moment for vain regrets. It was necessary to strengthen by the presence of an imposing force the Transalpine states which still leaned to the side of Rome. In Gaul no Roman forces were left. Two legions of the victorious Flavian army, the Eighth and the Eleventh, were immediately sent forward from Italy. These were accompanied by one of the most recently-levied of the Vitellian legions, the Twenty-first. The Sixth and Tenth were summoned from Spain, and the Fourteenth recalled from Britain. The command of these divisions, when combined, was assigned to Petilius Cerialis, an experienced, but not an active general, already known to us from the wars in Britain; and Domitian himself followed in their rear, to reap the glory of their success, if not to share their perils in person. As soon as it was known that forces so considerable were converging on the theatre of war, the patriotic fervour of the Gauls signally abated. Deputies from various states assembled in the territory of the Remi, a people who from the first had shown a disposition to acquiesce in the foreign domination. The decision of this congress was quickly taken. The Treviri were required to lay down their arms, and seek by prompt submission the pardon which further resistance might render unattainable. Valentinus, the envoy from this tribe, who still gave his voice for war, and dissuaded his countrymen from obeying this mandate, lost, in arguing and haranguing, the time which should have been devoted to active pre-

Fresh forces directed upon Gaul from Rome by Mucianus and Domitian.

parations. Civilis was wasting his strength in trifling expeditions; Classicus was supine; and Tutor neglected to seize the passes of the Alps, and guard the gates of Upper Germany. The fairest chance ever offered to a province for recovering its liberty was lost, it would seem, by the inefficiency of its self-constituted champions. While the Gauls were trifling, the Romans were acting with an energy which, even at this distance of time, cannot but strike us with awe. Such men were indeed their own destiny. Day by day, and month by month, the legions advanced, tramping eight hundred thousand paces along the marble roads of the empire. They traversed half the length of Italy to the foot of the Alps. There they divided into two bodies: one took the route of the Graian mountains into the heart of Gaul; the other scaled the walls of the Great St. Bernard, alighted on the Leman Lake, skirted its eastern extremity to Viviscus or Vevay, and from thence, still following the beaten track of four generations of conquerors, climbed the northern ridge of that hollow basin, and descended again to Aventicum in the valley of the Aar. The descent was now easy, and every omen favourable. At Vindonissa the avenging army was met by auxiliaries who had penetrated Helvetia by the passes of the Splugen, and it swept along, in its onward march, allies from Rhætia and Brigantia. Thus reinforced, the Twenty-first legion, under Sextilius Felix, entered Upper Germany by the valley of the Rhine.[1] When Tutor sent against it some of the revolted legionaries, who had taken service with the Gauls, these dastardly

The Gauls neglect to defend the entrance into their country.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 70.: "Cum auxiliaribus cohortibus per Rhætiam inrupere: accepit ala singularium . . . præerat Julius Briganticus." This native chief was, I conceive, from his name, from Bregenz on the lake of Constance. I venture to coin an appellation for his country.

soldiers returned, with a second treachery, to their eagles again. He retired, keeping clear of Moguntiacum with its little Roman garrison, and occupied Bingium, where he hoped to be able to maintain himself by breaking the bridge over the Nahe, which flows before it. But the Romans swam or waded the stream, attacked him in his unfortified position, and easily routed his disconcerted militia. The spirit of the Treviri, long reduced to inactivity by the policy of their conquerors, was broken by one defeat. Their warriors threw away their arms, and dispersed; their chiefs, for the most part, hastened to submit. The Vitellian legions, which, after joining the standard of Civilis, had been quartered among them, swore of their own accord in the name of Vespasian, but still refrained from offering him their arms, and retired moodily to a distance.[1]

Successes of the Romans.

At this crisis there seems to have been some delay in the movements of the Romans. Possibly their forces, collected from such distant quarters, were not yet concentrated. Valentinus exerted all his influence to revive the courage of the Treviri, and assisted Tutor in rallying a remnant of his followers to the combat. Cerialis at last reached Moguntiacum at the head of a powerful army. Such was his confidence in the numbers of his legionary force, that he dismissed his auxiliaries to their own homes, a token of strength which had great moral effect far and near. He then ascended the valley of the Moselle, attacked and defeated the Trevirans in a brilliant action at Rigodulum, and captured Valentinus. The colony of Galba opened its gates in mingled hope and fear. The soldiers, intent only on plunder, demanded that the city, the capital of northern Gaul, should be

Petilius Cerialis enters Trèves, and receives the submission of the revolted legionaries.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 70.

abandoned to pillage; and Cerialis deserves credit for firmness in disappointing their licentious passions. This victory completed the conversion of the revolted legionaries, all of whom pressed forward, penitent and humbled, to salute the triumphant eagles. The Treviri, the Remi, the Lingones, all the nations in the rear of the Roman camps, had now returned to their allegiance. Cerialis condescended to reason with them on their folly in murmuring against the prudent and paternal government of which he was the minister. He reminded them, not only that the career of military honours was open to them, in common with the citizens of Rome itself, but that the tribute they must pay to Rome was not heavier than would be required to maintain their own independence; that under a good emperor they would enjoy all the benefits of his wisdom and moderation, while under a bad one, as bad there must sometimes be, just as there must sometimes be droughts and famines in the natural world, they at least, as the furthest removed from Rome, would suffer last and lightest.[1] It had been better, perhaps, to have referred them to their own past history, and convinced them that freedom had hitherto brought them no blessing, had procured them neither greatness of mind nor material civilization; that under the sway of their priests and nobles, they had acquired the vices of the most corrupt, and retained the barbarity of the rudest state of society. Children cannot govern themselves, and the Gauls had shown themselves as incapable of self-government as children.[2]

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 74.: "Quomodo sterilitatem aut nimios imbres et cætera naturæ mala, ita luxum vel avaritiam dominantium tolerate."

[2] In the fine speech here given to Cerialis, Tacitus is, in fact, accounting to his own conscience for the selfish tyranny of his countrymen: "Nam pulsis, quod Di prohibeant, Romanis, quid aliud quam bella omnium inter se gentium existent? Octingentorum annorum fortuna disciplinaque compages hæc coaluit, quæ convelli sine exitio convellentium non potest." We must admit in the case of the

Operations in the country of the Tre-

Civilis and Classicus, now acting together in the crisis of their peril, resorted to artifice, and tried to damp the ardour of Cerialis by representing that Vespasian, according to their private accounts, was dead; that Mucianus and Domitian, without the substance of his authority, were mere shadows; that an opportunity was now offered him, as the chief military power in Gaul, to make himself supreme over the nation: to this they for their parts would make no opposition, content to be left in possession of the Batavian and German territories, on which their own camps were planted. But Cerialis was not to be seduced. He vouchsafed no reply to the rebels, while he sent their envoys at once to Domitian as a pledge of his fidelity. He was now intent on fortifying the positions he had won; but he was not strong enough to prevent the junction of the bands of Gauls and Germans who continued still to flock to the standard of the patriots. Civilis would have protracted the war to await an expected invasion from the eastern bank of the Rhine; but Classicus and Tutor represented the weakness of the Roman forces at this moment, and the policy of anticipating the arrival of fresh succours from Spain and Britain. It was determined to attack without delay the Roman camp, entrenched outside the walls of Trèves, on the further bank of the Moselle. The legions were exposed to imminent danger, for they were taken by surprise, and their commander himself, who had carelessly passed the night beyond the lines, was absent at the moment of the assault. The bridge which connected the city with its suburb, and thence with their camp, was burnt by the assailants. At the same instant their rampart was scaled, some squadrons of cavalry were

Romans, as promptly as in our own, that the supineness of the mass of their subjects in the prospect of throwing off the yoke, speaks favourably for its easiness and mildness.

routed; and great were the havoc and disorder, when Cerialis at last appeared amongst them, and, unarmed and uncovered as he was, by prayers, threats, and almost by main force, stopped their flight, and rallied them to the combat. Amidst the tents and baggage neither Roman nor German leaders could set their forces in array, and for a long time the conflict was maintained pell-mell by personal skill and courage. At last the Twenty-first legion made itself room to form, sustained the broken and yielding masses of its comrades, and gave them time to recover, when the fury of the barbarians received a check, and the historian declares, in an access of unusual fervour, that, by the aid of Providence alone, the victors of the morning were finally vanquished. By the promptness with which he followed up his success, pursuing the routed Germans and destroying their camp, Cerialis retrieved the reputation his supineness had nearly forfeited. The confederates were attacked in the rear by the people of Colonia, who gave up to the Romans the wife and children of Civilis. The fugitives were harassed, and cut up in all directions. Another danger impended on their flank. The Fourteenth legion was on its way from the shores of Britain. The Caninefates manned their vessels, and put out to sea to intercept it; but these succours reached the land, and the men had been already disembarked and sent forward when their transports were attacked, and sunk or disabled. Some successful skirmishes still kept up the failing courage of the allies, but the toils were closing around them, and step by step they were driven towards the island of the Batavians, the last precarious foothold of the boasted empire of the Gauls.[1]

Once more, and once only, on the auspicious field of Vetera, Civilis turned at bay, and drew forth all his forces for a desperate encounter. The soil in his

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iv. 77—79.

front was marshy, and he had thrown into it a copious stream of water from the Rhine, by driving a mound obliquely into the channel of the river. Here, he conceived, the greater strength and stature of the Germans, and their skill in swimming, would give them a notable advantage; and so indeed it proved, the battle being long contested with loss and risk to the Romans, whom Cerialis in vain excited by appeals to the pride of each legion in turn, to the Fourteenth as conquerors of Britain, to the Sixth as givers of the empire to Galba, to the legions of the Rhine as bulwarks of the Roman frontier. At last the treachery of a deserter disclosed to him a path in the morass by which a chosen band could surprise the right flank of the enemy. At the same moment a general charge was made on their front, and the Germans, pressed on two sides, were driven headlong into the river on their left. Had the Roman flotilla been at hand, their whole force would have been utterly destroyed; but the crisis was still delayed, heavy rains checked the pursuit of the Roman cavalry, and, swimming, wading, or skulking from the field, the routed hordes effected their escape.[1]

Civilis is defeated before Vetera.

Civilis had now crossed the Rhine, and thrown himself into the territory of his German allies, the Chauci and the Frisii. He abandoned the line of the Wahal, and the defence of the Batavian island, and after carrying off his corn and cattle, cut the dams with which Drusus had confined the ancient channel of the Rhine, and laid the country far and wide under water.[2] Behind this

Civilis crosses the Rhine.

[1] Tac *Hist.* v. 14—18.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* v. 19.: "Quin et diruit molem a Druso Germanico factam, Rhenumque prono alveo in Galliam ruentem, disjectis quæ morabantur, effudit. Sic velut abacto amne, tenuis alveus insulam inter Germanosque continentium terrarum speciem fecerat." When Drusus opened the channel into the lake Flevus, he nearly drained the old channel by Lugdunum (alter Rhein), thus effacing the sepa-

new frontier he still maintained an imposing force, swelled by a crowd of Treviran fugitives, among whom were, it was said, one hundred and thirteen of their senators.[1] The Romans were threatening his position from several points. He divided his troops into four detachments, and attacked them simultaneously at Arenacum, Batavodurum, Grinnes and Vada.[2] Everywhere he was repulsed; but the Romans again had no ships to complete their victory. The Germans, who had probably greater command of the river, made a night attack in boats on the camp at Novesium; and here once more the want of vigilance of Cerialis, who was passing the night in an intrigue with a native woman, had nearly proved fatal to the Romans.[3] The Germans made prize of the prætorian galley, in which they hoped to have captured the general himself, and bore it off as an offering to their priestess Veleda. Meanwhile the Romans, who had occupied the Batavian villages between the Wahal and Rhine, ostentatiously spared the private estates of Civilis, and this, with the repeated failure of his operations, threw suspicion on his earnestness in the cause. He had boasted that, should the foe dare to set foot within the island, he would instantly crush them; but this vaunt he did not attempt to execute. The

The Romans occupy the "Island."

ration between the island on the southern or Gaulish bank and the German continent on the northern. Such seems to be the meaning of a passage which has caused much perplexity to the commentators.

[1] By senators we are to understand decurions of the Roman colony. Steininger, *Gesch. der Trevirer*, p. 129.

[2] Arenacum is supposed, from its name perhaps, to be Arnheim. If so, it was not on the Wahal, but on the old Rhine, and the Romans, we thus see, had now occupied the "Island." The other places are quite uncertain.

[3] Tacitus speaks of the camps at Novesium and Bonna, and does not specify on which the attack was made. I should have supposed he meant Bonna, from the mention of the general's paramour, Claudia Sacrata, as an Ubian: but the German boats, he says, *descended* the river, which can hardly be reconciled with a locality so high up the stream.

allies had urged him to finish the war by a decisive engagement; but he had restrained their ardour, and divided their forces. The suspicion was not without colour and reason. Civilis was negotiating with the Romans. To them he set forth, it seems, as merits, the very same acts of perfidy with which his countrymen had reproached him. In making terms for himself, he may have stipulated for his people also; and Cerialis was fain to admit the transparent pretence that they had taken up arms, not against the majesty of Rome, but for the empire of Vespasian. Civilis was allowed to rank himself among the partisans of the new government, with Mucianus, Primus, and Cerialis himself. The Germans of the right bank were thus abandoned by the chief they had chosen, and the sullen acknowledgment they made of the superior fortune of the Romans, seems to have been accepted as a submission by their weary and exhausted conquerors.[1] Domitian and Mucianus had not advanced further than Lugdunum on the Rhone, when the news of this pacification reached them, and the young prince could return to Rome with his share of laurels to greet his brother's triumphal entry from Palestine.[2]

Civilis treats with the Romans.

The narrative of Tacitus, such as it has descended to us, breaks off in the middle of the speech with which Civilis is supposed to plead his cause with the Romans. No monument of antiquity remains to inform us of the Batavian's further career, or what faith was kept with a foe who had

The narrative of Tacitus interrupted.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* v. 23—26.

[2] According to Suetonius, Domitian's object in making his expedition into Gaul was to rival the exploits of Titus. It was popularly rumoured that he tampered with Cerialis to get himself proclaimed emperor by the army. His successes, such as they were, gained him at least the compliment of a spirited address in the poem of Silius Italicus (iii. 608.):

"Jam puer auricomo præformidate Batavo."

proved himself more dangerous to Rome than Caractacus or Arminius. They had defended their own country against the invader; but Civilis had invaded the empire, and almost succeeded in wresting from it the most precious of its provinces, the nursery of its amplest resources and its bravest auxiliaries. The account our historian has given us of this memorable mutiny— for it is as a military, not a national revolt that we must evidently regard it—seems on the whole one of the least successful episodes in his history; it leaves but an indistinct impression of the strength of the opposing forces, of the localities, and even the incidents of which it treats; but it fails still more remarkably in representing to us the character of the chief actor in the scene. Civilis, prominent as he was for a moment on the world's stage, prominent as he must always be on the page of history, remains to us a name only. He stands before us without national or personal characteristics, without even the mythical halo which surrounds the figure of Arminius; and we part from him at last quite content to be ignorant of what finally became of him, or whether he was really a traitor, or only unfortunate. Nor do we learn, nor do we care to inquire, what became of his still more shadowy associates, Classicus and Tutor; whether they were included in their chief's capitulation, or suffered in the proscription which surely followed, however slight are its traces, of the leaders in the crushed sedition. Upon one only of the names mentioned in this narrative a ray of interest has alighted, from an anecdote preserved by Dion, and related with greater pathos by Plutarch. Julius Sabinus, it has been said, concealed himself after his defeat. He caused a trusty slave to fire his house, and give out that he had perished in the flames. The story obtained credit, and search ceased to be made for him, while he concealed himself in a cave in a deep forest. To his faithful

The end of Civilis unknown.

Pathetic story of Sabinus.

spouse, Eponina, he contrived to communicate the secret. She joined him in his retreat, and continued there to live with him for the space of nine years, interrupted only by her journeys, even as far as Rome, to consult with his friends, and learn if it might be possible to procure his pardon. In that hiding-place she bore her husband two sons, and at last the whole party ventured to present themselves together to the emperor. Eponina told the affecting story of her conjugal devotion, and showing the pledges of her love, declared that she had endured to bear them in misery and darkness, that the suppliants for mercy might be the more in number. But Vespasian, it is said, was utterly unmoved. He pitilessly commanded the execution of both husband and wife. Eponina exclaimed that it was a happier lot to die than to live in the guilty enjoyment of his blood-stained sovereignty.[1]

Such, says an eloquent Frenchman, *was the last blood shed for the cause of ancient Gaul, the last act of devotion to a social order, a government, a religion, the return of which was neither possible nor desirable.*[2] The narrative now concluded sufficiently shows that national spirit had already become extinct among the Gaulish people. It was not from

[1] Dion, lxvi. 3.; Plutarch, *Amatôr.* p. 770. It may be some relief to the reader to know that this story, one of the most pathetic in Roman annals, seems liable to great suspicion. Dion intimates that both the husband and wife were sacrificed. Plutarch speaks only of Eponina. There could be no motive for such barbarity towards the contemptible Sabinus, except as a pretender to the blood of the Julii. This feeling would have been as strong against the children as their father; but, according to Plutarch, the son certainly survived, and he had himself seen one of them at Delphi, filling probably the official dignity of the priesthood. Yet it is hardly worth while to pluck the story of the individual from the mass of suffering which the historian of these times must record, and, with Lucan at Pharsalia, I often mutter, amidst the horrors I have undertaken to relate,

"Mors nulla querela
Digna sua est; nullosque hominum lugere vacamus. . . .
Per populos hic Roma perit."

[2] Thierry, *Gaulois*, iii. in fin.

their own forests, or stockades, still less from their cities, that the last heroes of resistance to Rome had sprung. Civilis and Tutor, Classicus and Sabinus, were all officers attached to the Roman armies; they had learned the art of war under Roman training, and their ideas of national government were only a faint reflex of the Roman. Their aim at self-aggrandisement was hardly in any case disguised; yet the imperfect sympathies of their countrymen were in no wise shocked by it. We trace in their attempt no germ of a self-evolving and self-sustaining power. The two great elements of Gaulish nationality, the nobility and the priesthood, had been absorbed by the spirit of assimilation to Rome. The nobles were content to be centurions and tribunes; the Druids rejoiced in the pensions and titles of Augurs and Flamens.[1] We shall hear no more of either the one or the other. Occasions will occur when Gaul will again play a great part in Roman history; but it will be only the Gaul of the camp. The empire of Rome will be won and lost by Gaulish hands; but they will be the hands of trained auxiliaries, with all the feelings, and even with the title of Romans. We have traced in this history the fall of Gallic independence between the eras of Cæsar and Vespasian: we have seen a great people conquered and extinguished. We now turn to another picture, that of the fall of Jewish independence, protracted through the same period: we shall see there also a great nation conquered and crushed; but the Jews, at least, have never suffered extinction.

[1] Thierry refers to the notices of the professors at Burdigala by Ausonius (iv. x.). In the fourth century the Gaulish priests of Apollo remembered without remorse that they were descended from the priests of Belenus. The number of Gauls we find with sacerdotal names deserves remark. Thus we have Julius Sacrovir, Julius Auspex, Claudia Sacrata. It seems probable that these appellations indicated the Druidical functions or descent of their bearers. Other cognomens, such as Civilis, Tutor, and Classicus, seem to be Gaulish appellations Latinized; at least we shall hardly meet with them among the genuine Romans.

CHAPTER LIX.

Maturity of the Jewish nation : its material prosperity: discontent with its position.—Resistance of brigands or false Christs.—Tumults in Jerusalem controlled by the Sanhedrim.—Insurrection in Galilee quelled (A. D. 52).—Felix, governor of Judea.—Agrippa a spy on the Jews.—Insurrection and defeat of Cestius Gallus (A. D. 66).—Vespasian takes the command.—Jewish factions: the Moderates and the Zealots.—Josephus the historian commands in Galilee.—His defence of Jotapata (A. D. 67).—He is taken, and attaches himself to the Romans.—Reduction of Galilee.—Second campaign (A. D. 68).—Reduction of Peræa.—Suspension of hostilities (A. D. 69).—Account of the Jews by Tacitus : his illiberal disparagement of them.—Revolution in Jerusalem.—Overthrow of the Moderate party.—The three chiefs of the Zealots, John, Simon, and Eleazar, and strife between them.—Topography of Jerusalem.—Titus commences the siege (A. D. 70).—The first wall stormed.—Roman circumvallation.—Famine and portents.—Escape of the Christians.—Capture of the citadel.—Storming of the Temple.—Burning of the Holy of Holies.—Feeble defence of the upper city.—Destruction of Jerusalem.—Capture of the Jewish chiefs.—Final reduction of Judea. —Massacres and confiscations.—Titus returns to Rome.—Triumph over Judea.—The arch of Titus. (A. D. 44–70. A. U. 797–823.)

The Jewish nation in the first century in the maturity of its powers.

IN commencing a chapter which will be devoted to the great insurrection of the Jews, ending in the destruction of their city and final subversion of their polity, it will be well to remark the distinction which existed between this people at the period we are considering, and all the other subjects of Rome. The victorious republic had never yet, throughout the long career of its conquests, confronted a nation in full strength and maturity. The Carthaginians, the Greeks, the Egyptians, and lastly the Gauls, had all passed their prime before the shock came, which broke them against the vigorous adolescence of the republic. But such was not the case with the Jews. After all the losses and disasters inflicted on its political weak-

ness, that extraordinary people was still growing in numbers, still advancing in moral influence. The narrow sphere of its natural frontiers, and the pressure of mighty empires on every side, had checked indeed its territorial extension. From David to Herod the bounds of Jewish occupation were still confined to the *peninsula* of Palestine; but the authority of Jewish ideas had made ample conquests beyond the ocean and the desert.[1] Outside the limits of Palestine the Jews, scattered in every city of the three continents, were not existing merely on sufferance. Strong in numbers, strong in national prejudices, stronger still in the force of their national character, they assumed everywhere an attitude more or less aggressive; not thrusting themselves indeed into political station, not coveting a share of the government, as long as they were suffered to manage their own affairs after their own fashion, but,—stranger, as it seemed, and more irritating,—seeking by all means to sway the minds of those about them, to wean them from their local prejudices, and inoculate them with a moral principle foreign to their own. Urged, apparently, in this unwonted career of proselytism by a blind instinct, they subjected themselves in every quarter to jealousy, and sometimes to persecution, such as had hitherto been almost unknown among heathen societies: but violence they had generally retaliated with equal vigour, till they had acquired in every city, from the Euphrates to the Nile and Tiber, a character, not perhaps wholly merited, for turbulence and seditiousness.

Its material prosperity.

The advance of the Jewish people in material resources, within the limits of their proper country, was not less strongly marked at this epoch. The impetus given by the Roman conquests

[1] David and Solomon (century xi. before Christ) had exacted tribute from various tribes as far as the Euphrates and the Red Sea (see 2 *Sam.* viii., 1 *Kings* iv.); but this was the exercise of a transient authority, and implies no extension of national inhabitancy.

to eastern commerce must have been keenly felt at the spot to which the traffic of Egypt, Syria, and Arabia, converged. The growth of a New City outside the walls of Jerusalem, the creation of traders and manufacturers, indicates a great industrial movement, and the magnificent constructions with which the elder Herod adorned the chief places of his dominions, not increasing, but, on the contrary, remitting at the same time, the burdens of his people, proves the fact still more decisively. Military training, no doubt, was checked among the Jews by the policy of the empire; but their youth were exempted, by special favour, from the ordinary waste of the conscription, and devoted without reserve to the labours of agriculture or commerce. The national heart beat as warmly and truly as ever. The old traditions were held in reverence; the Temple and its services frequented with all the ancient fervour; and in the direction now taken by its religious aspirations we discover a proof of the material prosperity of the nation. Worldly state was the invisible idol of the vacant fane of Jerusalem. The worship of wealth, grandeur, and dominion, blinded the Jews to the form of spiritual godliness; the rejection of the Saviour and the deification of Herod were parallel manifestations of the same engrossing delusion.

Its antique simplicity of manners.

The national pride, thus fostered by outward circumstances, in which all classes were involved, was not incompatible with an antique simplicity of manners which bound them together and gave a healthy vitality to the body politic. The tone of intercourse between various ranks among the Jews, even in the days of which the New Testament treats, still savours strongly of the patriarchal; their methods of national government, so far as it was free to act, were paternal; more dependence was placed by their rulers on popular patriotism and affection than on strict arrangements of finance or of police; the social relations seem to have been un-

usually pure, those, above all, of master and servant were natural and kindly; slavery among the Jews was so confined in its extent and so mild in practice, so guarded by law and custom, as to become a real source of strength instead of weakness to the commonwealth. The mutual interest which thus bound all classes together became a fulcrum for government, and when at last the nation rushed to arms, doubled the strength of its battalions.[1] The great rising of the Jews against the Romans, which is now to be related, was, beyond any other in ancient history, since the resistance at least of Greece to Xerxes, a common devotion to a common cause. The contest was that of a whole people (not indeed of all its members, but at least of every rank and every order) against a limited number of trained soldiers. The lesson, painful and humiliating, which it teaches us, stands alone perhaps in ancient, but has been repeated only too often in modern annals, that a nation in arms wages an unequal contest with skilful generals, disciplined legions, and abundant military resources.

Attitude of the Jews in the West and in the East.

Whatever were the causes which bound the Jews so closely together, and gave them such confidence in one another, such disregard for the rights and usages of the foreigner, it is important to observe that their spirit of self-

[1] Passages in the New Testament will occur to every reader to show how much the Jewish finance depended on voluntary contributions; how large a part the people themselves took in the administration and execution of their laws; how generally the menial was the "hired servant," not the slave of his master. This view of Jewish manners is fully borne out by Josephus. In the medley of classes which jostle together in his account of the insurrection, slaves have no place whatever. I am not sure that the term is so much as once mentioned in it. If I have not specifically alluded to the Mosaic arrangements for the periodical restitution of lands, and the cancelling of debts by personal service, which checked an undue accumulation of property, it is because we know not how far the Levitical law was actually in force at this period.

assertion was not less manifest abroad than at home. We have seen what disturbances marked their sojourn in Alexandria; we have noticed the devices of expulsion which a mild and favourable ruler was induced to launch against them at Rome. Throughout the Western Empire they were at least controlled with vigour; but in the East they defied the irregular police of the Parthians, made open war against the satraps of Babylonia, united themselves with the Syrians against the Greeks in those regions, and, a bolder and fiercer race than either, secured the victory to the party they espoused; until both Syrians and Greeks combined against them, and routed them with repeated slaughter. The Parthians, it seems, looked on in terror while these strangers, provoking or provoked, inundated their streets with blood. The Jews, worsted in the contest, seized on the cities of Nearda and Nisibis, and there continued to maintain themselves in half-acknowledged independence.[1]

Annexation of Judea to the Roman empire A.D. 41. A.U. 797.

The experience of Alexandria and Seleucia was not lost on the Roman government. The mildness with which the emperors, following the policy of Julius Cæsar, had generally treated the Jewish people, had not secured them against disturbances within the frontiers of Palestine, against the jealousy of its parties or the covert attempts of its princes to arm themselves in anticipation of a revolt. Agrippa was not allowed to complete the defences with which he had begun to encircle the most exposed front of Jerusalem.[2] This monarch left at his death four children. The eldest, a son, who bore his father's name, was at the time detained at Rome, and had completed his seventeenth year. The others were daughters: Berenice, aged sixteen,

[1] Joseph. *Antiq. Jud.* xviii. 10. These events occurred in the reign of Caligula.

[2] Joseph. *Antiq.* xix. 7. 2. Comp. *Bell. Jud.* v. 4. 2., and Tac. *Hist.* v. 12.

was already married to her uncle Herodes, king of the little territory of Chalcis; Mariamne was some years younger, and Drusilla a mere infant.[1] Claudius, ever attached to the traditions of his predecessors, would have sent the young Agrippa to assume his father's diadem; but he was dissuaded by his ministers, pretending that a prince so young should not be trusted with power, but influenced more probably by the pressure of their friends' solicitations to surrender this wealthy province to the cohort of a Roman governor.[2] Judea and Samaria were now placed by decree of the senate in dependence on the proconsulate of Syria, and Cuspius Fadus was the first officer appointed to govern them, with the title of Cæsar's procurator. But the family of Agrippa, thus summarily disinherited, were treated with outward respect; the first duty enjoined on Fadus was to chastise the people of Cæsarea and Sebaste, for the insults they had vented against the memory of their late sovereign.

Resistance of the brigands or false Christs.

Immediately a swarm of Roman officials alighted on the fair fields of the long-promised land. The freedmen and favourites of the court reaped the first fruits of the anticipated harvest. The public revenues of the country were assigned to the imperial fiscus, and thus the interests of the emperor himself were identified with those of his agents and commissioners. The yoke of Cæsar might not be heavier than that of Herod; but it pressed in a new place; the burden, harshly shifted, was felt to be more galling. The priests and nobles murmured, intrigued, conspired; the rabble bolder or more impatient, broke out into sedition, and fol-

[1] Berenice, according to the positive assertion of Josephus (*Antiq.* xix. 9.), was sixteen at the time of her father's death, A. U. 797. At a later period we shall remember this date with some surprise, and may be tempted to suspect the historian of an error.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* v. 9.: "Claudius, defunctis regibus aut ad modicum redactis, Judæam provinciam equitibus Romanis aut libertis per-

lowed every chief who offered to lead them to victory and independence. Theudas and Tholomæus, with many others,—brigands as they were styled by the Romans; Christs, elected and anointed by Jehovah, as they boldly proclaimed themselves, pointing to the Law and the Prophets of their sacred books as their title to divine support,—were routed in the field, or hunted through the wilderness, till one after another they were taken and slain.[1] Fadus was succeeded by Tiberius Alexander, against whom as a renegade from the national faith the Jews were the more embittered. Yet his defection was more than counterbalanced by the conversion to Judaism of Helena, queen of Adiabene, and her son Izates, whose territory, lying between Palestine and Parthia, might form a convenient link in the chain now secretly forging, to bind in strict alliance together the greatest rivals of Rome and the most reluctant of her subjects. The government of Tiberius was signalized by the capture and execution of Jacobus and Simon, sons of Judas the Galilean; but under Cumanus, who followed him, the populace of Jerusalem itself rose in frenzy against their masters, and the Roman soldiers were let loose with drawn swords upon them in the midst of the holy season of Passover.[2] It was only indeed under extraordinary provocation that the populace of the Jewish capital, who were generally controlled by the supe-

Tumults in Jerusalem controlled by the prudence of the Sanhedrim.

[1] For Theudas and Tholomæus, see Joseph. *Antiq.* xx. 1. 4. For the "Egyptian," *Acts* xxi. 38.; Joseph. *Antiq.* xx. 6. 6. The term pseudo-Christ is applied to these pretenders in *Matt.* xxix. 4., and thence adopted by the Fathers of the Church. Josephus calls them *λησταί, ἀρχιλησταί, γόητες, ἀπατεῶνες*, and "false prophets," but never *ψευδόχριστοι*. He makes no more allusion to the false Christs than to the true Christ. The subject of the Messiah was one he shrank from contemplating in any shape. This may account for his silence about the persecution of the "Christians" by Nero at Rome, even supposing these to have included the turbulent Christ-seeking Jews.

[2] Joseph. *Antiq.* xx. 3. 4. The date is not precisely fixed, but may be A.D. 50 (A.U. 803).

rior prudence of their chiefs, broke into violence in the streets. In the Sanhedrim were many devoted adherents of Rome, and the rest were well aware of the weakness of the national power. All agreed in the sentiment of Caiaphas the high priest, when the multitude seemed ready for a moment to accept Jesus as the Christ: *If we let him alone all men will believe on him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation. . . . It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.*[1] But the ruder independence of the Galileans was not so easily kept in check. Their tract of heath and mountain was always then, as it has since always been, in a state of partial insurrection. The Roman authorities were constantly engaged in hunting down the banditti, who assumed the title of patriots, and gladly employed against them the local rivalry which nourished perpetual feud between the tribes of Galilee and Samaria. It was necessary for the inhabitants of the northern region to traverse Samaria on their periodical pilgrimages to Jerusalem. On such occasions they seldom escaped without insult, if not actual injury. The armed bands of Galilee would sometimes, in revenge, descend on the homesteads of Samaria, and harry the lands of men whom they accused of too great subservience to the foreigner.

Insurrection in Galilee quelled by Quadratus. A.D. 52. A.U. 805.

The Romans interfered. Cumanus placed himself at the head of four cohorts with a force of Samaritan militia, attacked Eleazar, the Galilean chief, routed and put his followers to the sword. Again the Galileans rose with redoubled fury; the chiefs of Jerusalem in vain implored them to submit to inevitable fate. The Roman battalions were not always successful in their attacks on these desperate men. The war would have spread

[1] St. John's *Gospel*, xi. 48. Salvador, *Dom. Rom.* i. 493.

from canton to canton, and set the province in a flame, had not Quadratus, the prefect of Syria, interposed with the mass of his forces, trampled down all resistance with ferocious energy, and extinguished the quarrel of the provincial factions in the blood of a multitude of captives. The governor ascribed the disturbance to the rivalry of the Roman procurators. Cumanus presided in Galilee; Felix, the brother of the favourite Pallas, seems to have held independent authority in Samaria. Claudius, appealed to for instructions, left the decision to Quadratus, and he, well aware of the powerful interest of Felix, allowed the punishment, which should have been shared alike by both, to descend upon Cumanus only.[1] The whole territory of the Jewish people was now united under the sway of Felix, who continued to enjoy his power, and accumulate riches, for many years after the death of his patron and the disgrace of his brother.[2] His long reign is marked by repeated mention of the bandits and false prophets still infesting the province; the zeal for independence, rash and futile in its efforts, was still unabated; but in general, from the absence of public events which distinguishes the epoch, the country seems to have enjoyed comparative tranquillity. Claudius, before his death, gave the young Herod Agrippa the tetrarchy of Philip, consisting of some districts beyond Jordan, together with Tra-

Felix governor of Judea.

[1] Tac. *Ann.* xii. 54.; Joseph. *Antiq.* xx. 5—7 (A.D. 52, A.U. 805). There is some discrepancy in these statements, which are not, perhaps, irreconcilable. Of the government of Felix Tacitus had said (*Hist.* v. 9.): "E quibus Antonius Felix per omnem sævitiam ac libidinem jus regium servili ingenio exercuit, Drusilla Cleopatræ et Antonii nepte in matrimonium accepta."

[2] Felix is supposed to have been procurator of Judea, six years under Nero, from A. D. 54 to 60. Such is Salvador's statement; but the precise dates are not indicated by the historians. Comp. *Act. Apost.* xxix. 10. The Romans, it should be observed, gave the official name of Judea to the whole region of Palestine, including, besides, Judea proper, Galilee, Samaria, and Peræa.

chonitis and Batanea. Drusilla was married to a prince of Emesa, a proselyte to Judaism; but Felix, becoming enamoured of her, did not scruple to carry her off from her husband. When he was at last recalled, the Jews took occasion to prefer complaints against him; but he was still protected by Nero, and notwithstanding the wealth he was supposed to have amassed, seems to have lived and died in uninterrupted prosperity.[1]

The spirit of disaffection controlled by the vigorous measures of Corbulo.

The discreet and the timid still retained the chief influence in Jerusalem. The Romans had gained many adherents in every rank, especially among the priests and nobles, and divided the masses of the people, while they kept from their sight the young princes, who, as their natural leaders, might have combined them together. But on the frontiers of Syria, at this moment, the elements of commotion were more rife. Every pulsation of national feeling in Parthia and Armenia was communicated through the synagogues on the Tigris and Euphrates, and from station to station across the desert, to the centres of Jewish life at Jerusalem, Tiberias and Cæsarea. Full of scorn for the unwarlike character of Nero, full of hope in the unappeased discontent of the Jewish people, the Parthians were now making aggressions on the side of Armenia, which were in fact a blow to the honour and therewith to the influence of Rome. The imperial officers required the tributary chiefs on the frontier to arm on their behalf. Corbulo, the bravest of the Roman generals, was placed at the head of fresh forces; the disagreements which ensued between him and Quadratus ended in the dismissal of the prefect, and the union of the eastern provinces

[1] Josephus (*Antiq. Jud.* xx. 7. 8.) says that he was protected by the influence of his brother; but Pallas was disgraced as early as 56, though he was not put to death by Nero till 63. Felix had a son by Drusilla, named Agrippa. Joseph. *Antiq. Jud.* xx. 6. 2.

under the best man the empire could summon to their defence. The Jews watched the progress of military operations; and if dismayed at the defeat of the Parthians, they were reassured by the death of Corbulo which so speedily followed. But the work of this general of the ancient stamp, rapid as it was, remained firmly established. Corbulo had restored the discipline of the legions, long demoralized by the negligence of their chiefs and the luxury of their Syrian cantonments. He had formed an army of veteran legions: he left the Third, the Fifth, the Tenth, and the Twelfth in full pride and vigour, to curb the discontent or turbulence which brooded over hopes of insurrection. And so thoroughly had he quelled the spirit of the Parthians, that, when, three years after his death, the West was involved in universal confusion,—when the chiefs of the legions were hastening from all quarters to wrestle for the empire in Italy, when Gaul on one side, as we have seen, and Judea, as we are about to see, on the other were at once in open revolt,—the hereditary foes of Rome still kept their swords in the scabbard, and neither gave aid to the insurgents, nor sought aggrandisement for themselves.[1]

The ascendancy of Rome in the East acknowledged by the Parthians.

Felix, the procurator of Judea, was succeeded in 815 by Porcius Festus, who was carried off by sickness after a vigorous government of two years. Festus was followed by Albinus, and after another interval of two years, marked by no occurrence of moment, Gessius Florus undertook the control of the Jewish people, who were becoming daily more refractory. For their coercion the Romans had invented a peculiar machinery. To Agrippa, the tetrarch, for by this style we may best

The Romans employ Agrippa as a spy upon the Jews in Jerusalem.

[1] This submission of the Parthians may be partly ascribed to a personal admiration conceived, as it would seem, by Vologesus for Nero, of which evidence has been given already. See above, chap. lv.

distinguish him, they had given the title of king of the sacrifices, in virtue of which he was suffered to reside in the palace at Jerusalem, and retain certain functions, fitted to impose on the imagination of the more ardent votaries of Jewish nationality. The palace of the Herods overlooked the Temple, and from its upper rooms the king could observe all that passed in that mart of business and intrigue. Placed, however, as a spy in this watchtower, he was regarded by the Zealots, the faction of independence, as a foe to be baffled rather than a chief to be respected and honoured. They raised the walls of their sanctuary to shut out his view, and this, among other causes of discontent between the factions in the city, ripened to an enmity which presaged the expulsion of the king with all the friends of Rome about him, at the first outbreak of the now inevitable insurrection[1]

The Sicarii, or secret assassins.

And now was introduced into the divisions of this unhappy people a new feature of atrocity. The Zealots sought to terrify the more prudent or time-serving by an organized system of private assassination. Their *Sicarii*, or men of the dagger, are recognised in the records of the times as a secret agency, by which the most impatient of the patriots calculated on exterminating the chief supporters of the foreign government. The conspirators met under oath in secret, and chose the victims who should in turn be sacrificed. Their sentence was executed in the streets, or even on the steps of the Temple, on occasions of public festival, and no precautions availed to protect the objects of their enmity.[2] Hitherto the Romans, from policy rather than respect, had omitted to occupy Jerusalem with a military force. They were now invited and implored

[1] Joseph. *Antiq. Jud.* xx. 7. 11.

[2] Joseph. *Antiq. Jud.* xx. 7. 5. The historian, however, ascribes the most daring of these assassinations, that of the priest Jonathan, to the instigation of the governor Felix.

by the chiefs of the priesthood and nobility, and Florus sent a detachment to seize the city and protect the lives of his adherents. This was the point to which the Zealots themselves had wished to lead him. On entering the walls the Romans found the roofs thronged with an excited and mutinous population: they were assailed first with stones, then with more deadly weapons: and when they had succeeded in forcing their way to the strong places of the city, and taken possession of them, they were unable to communicate among themselves, or with the stations behind them. The procurator at Cæsarea shrank from sending a larger force, to become entangled in similar difficulties. In the popular councils the Zealots were now triumphant. Agrippa in vain harangued the multitude in favour of his patrons. He found it prudent to withdraw in haste to his own territories. The Idumean dynasty ceased to reign even in the hearts of the patriots. They looked back to the glorious era of the Maccabees. The Lower City and the Temple were abandoned to the people, while the Romans held the citadel, with the palace, and other heights and towers of the Upper City on Mount Zion, where the Roman banners waved over the chiefs of the Herodian or Romanizing faction. For seven days the possession of these respective strongholds was more or less warmly contested; but the conflict resulted in the conflagration of the royal residence and other buildings on Zion, the capture of the citadel, the slaughter of the high-priest Ananias, and finally the capitulation of the Romans. But the Zealots were resolved to render accommodation impossible, and involve the nation in inexpiable guilt. The capitulation was ruthlessly violated and every armed invader passed on the edge of the sword.[1]

Insurrection at Jerusalem. Capitulation and massacre of a Roman force.

Cestius Gallus, the governor of Syria, had been

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* ii. 17. 10.

preparing to succour his advanced detachment with the forces of the province. He put himself at the head of the Twelfth legion, with six thousand men picked from other corps, and several thousands of auxiliaries. Agrippa was required to attend the expedition. The Jews rushed forth from Jerusalem and the neighbouring cities, to meet this array. Enthusiasm supplied the place of discipline and training, and, to the surprise of all but those who believed in the divinity of their mission, they broke the ranks of the advancing Romans, and repulsed them with the loss of five hundred men. Gallus was saved from total rout only by his numerous cavalry, in which arm the Jews, unprepared and ill-appointed, were wholly deficient. For three days the proconsul kept within his entrenched camp, which the insurgents had not the means of attacking; then, resuming courage, he advanced again towards Jerusalem. At the instance of Agrippa he even proffered terms of accommodation. But the Jews, headed by the resolute Simon, son of Giora, not only refused to entertain them, but received the bearers with a shower of arrows. Thereupon Gallus led his troops to the gates, and renewed his assaults on various points for five days. Every attack was steadily repelled, and day by day the defenders cast headlong from the walls the most noted partisans of Rome, whom they caught still lurking in the stronghold of national independence. The position of Jerusalem, held by desperate men, defied an irregular assault. Meanwhile the population was rising on the rear and flanks of the assailants. Gallus was compelled to retire once more to the confines of his province, with the loss of five thousand men, many officers, and the eagle of his legion. In dismay he announced to the proconsul that all Judea was in rebellion. Florus hastened to fix on his subordinate the blame of this serious disaster. Though we are

Disastrous expedition of Cestius Gallus.
A.D. 66.
A.U. 819.

not informed what measures were taken against him, it would seem from an expression of Tacitus that his death, which occurred only a few months later, was ascribed by many to chagrin or apprehension.[1]

Vespasian appointed to conduct operations against the Jews. A. D. 67. A. U. 820.

The defeat of Gallus had occurred in the first days of October, 66; and the account of it reached Nero in Greece.[2] The importance of the crisis was at once understood. Nero had no abler captain than Vespasian, and this man was chosen accordingly to command the Roman forces in the disturbed region.[3] The commotions so often recurring in Judea had evidently come to a head, and required complete and final suppression. Vespasian was directed to proceed by land into Syria, collecting troops and war-engines on his route, while Titus took ship for Alexandria, and summoned from thence the Fifteenth legion, to serve in the impending campaign. By the spring of the next year a force of three legions, with a full complement of allies and auxiliaries, was mustered at Ptolemais, a convenient spot for the protection of the districts which still adhered to the Romans, and at the same time for conducting operations against Galilee on one side, and Judea on the other.[4]

The chiefs of the Jewish parties. A. D. 67. A. U. 820.

The six months' interval which had elapsed had not been unemployed by the Jews. The party which favoured the Roman domination had already been crushed in its headquarters at Jerusalem; its scattered members had taken refuge in the Roman camps. But the nation was still divided into two factions, that of the Zealots, the assertors of national independence, re-

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* ii. 19.; Suet. *Vespas.* 4.; Tac. *Hist.* v. 10.
[2] Clinton, *Fast. Rom.* i. 48.
[3] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iii. 1. 2.: μόνον εὑρίσκει Οὐεσπασιανὸν ταῖς χρείαις ἀναλογοῦντα.
[4] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iii. 2. 4. The legionary force amounted to 18,000, the auxiliaries to 20,000, the allied contingents to 20,000 more (*Bell. Jud.* iii. 4. 2.).

solved to regain their freedom or perish, and the Herodians, who, still hoping to retain their place among the nations, were willing to accept a compromise, and acknowledge, as the price of existence, the supremacy of a foreign government. Of the one party the most prominent chiefs were Simon Bargiora, Eleazar, and John of Giscala; all of whom became notorious in the events which followed: while of the other, more respectable for rank and station, the leader was the high-priest Ananus or Annas. The merits of Ananus, if we may believe Josephus, were equal to his position, and, had he lived, his views, it was conceived, might have retained the ascendancy, and preserved Jerusalem together with the nationality, if not the independence of the Jews. At this moment, indeed, whatever jealousies might exist between them, both parties still acted ostensibly in concert; but the second was the more powerful of the two, and, in the measures of defence they adopted in common, it was to the captains of the Herodian faction that the most considerable commands were intrusted.

Vespasian's first operations directed against Galilee.

The Sanhedrim had been converted into a council of war, and had divided Palestine into seven military districts, besides that of the capital itself. Of these, the most important, from wealth and population as well as from its advanced position on the frontier of Syria, embraced the Upper and Lower Galilee, and was occupied by a strong line of posts from the sea to the Lake of Tiberias. But the rich plain of Esdraelon, which lay between this mountain zone and Samaria, was overshadowed by the Roman fortress of Ptolemais; and the tetrarchy of Agrippa, which reached to the border of the lake, menaced Galilee on its eastern flank. Strong as it was by nature, and abounding in strong as well as populous cities, Galilee was critically placed between the outposts of the enemy, and the chief to whom it was entrusted was expected to maintain it

from its own resources, with little hope of support from the centre of the Jewish power. Cestius Gallus had aimed a rash blow at Jerusalem itself; but the new leader of the Romans, warned by his defeat, deemed it prudent to adopt other tactics, and it was Vespasian's plan to isolate Galilee from Samaria and Judea, and effect its complete reduction before he turned his arms against the hostile metropolis.

Josephus, the historian, placed in command of Galilee.

The command in Galilee was given by the Sanhedrim to Josephus, the son of Matthias, the celebrated historian, as he afterwards became, of the war, and compiler of the Antiquities of his nation. He belonged to an ancient and noble family, and was noted already for his learning and abilities as well as for his birth. He had visited Rome; and, besides being distinguished with the favour of Poppæa, had been disposed, by what he had witnessed of the splendour of the republic, to acquiesce in her conquering destiny.[1] He was not more than thirty years of age, a time of life, as he remarks, when, if a man has happily escaped sin, he can scarcely guard himself against slander.[2] The circumstance, indeed, of his voyage to Rome, and introduction to the imperial household, gave rise perhaps to jealousies and suspicions, and when on his return he avowed the moderation of his views, and his belief in Roman invincibility, he became no doubt an object of hostility and possibly of misrepresentation to patriots of a more ardent stamp. But the Herodians, as has been said, now prevailed in the Jewish councils, and Josephus was deputed to take the command in Galilee, and conduct the defence of that region in the way he deemed most conducive to the general interest.

In the history he has given us of the Jewish War, Josephus dwells, as might be expected, with great

[1] Joseph. *Vit.* 3. [2] Joseph. *Vit.* 15.

minuteness, on his administration of this province, which bore the brunt of the first campaign against the Romans. But besides this general narrative of the war, we possess a second work by the same author, in which he relates the particulars of his own life and personal adventures; and this differs materially in political colour from the first. The *History* had been written soon after the events themselves, in which he bore so eminent a part, when he had fallen into the hands of the Romans, and had consented to purchase their favour by a tribute of unlimited admiration. In this work it was his object to excuse to his countrymen his own recent defection; to represent the fidelity with which he had served their true interests, as agent of the party who sought to preserve their nation, though with the sacrifice of its independence; to charge on the rashness of the Zealots the ruin which had actually befallen them, from which he had himself escaped by timely but justifiable submission. But in the *Life*, which was composed twenty years later, in reply to the insinuations of a personal enemy, that he had deserved ill both of Jews and Romans by the aimless obstinacy of his defence, he seeks no longer to keep up appearances with his countrymen, but devotes all his ingenuity to showing that he was throughout a covert friend of Rome, seeking, under the guise of prudent patriotism, to smooth the progress of the invaders, and deliver Palestine into their hands. If a cloud of suspicion hangs to this day over the head of the historian, he owes it to this shameless representation of his own conduct. The ardent upholders of a Jewish nationality, which has survived in some sense the fall of Jerusalem nearly eighteen centuries, still denounce him, from his own words, as a renegade to their cause.[1] His equivocation is patent, and admits

Equivocal character of Josephus. Variation in his own account of his conduct in the "History," and in the "Life."

[1] See Salvador's History, ii. 15. 49.

of no defence; yet I believe that of the two representations he gives us of his policy, the former is the nearer to the truth;—that he was more faithful to his professions, in fact, than he wished, at a later period, to be supposed; that he has falsely accused himself, to preserve the favour of his masters, of crimes which should only have gained him their contempt. He seeks in vain to repudiate the glory which must ever attach, in his own despite, to his skill and prowess. Allowing for many exaggerations and misstatements in both, according to their respective bias, I still regard the *Wars*, rather than the *Life*, as the genuine record of the campaign in Galilee.

Military resources of Judea.

If the resources of the Jewish people were unequal to the task of resisting the concentrated energies of Rome, they were far more formidable than could have been expected from the smallness of their country, and their slender experience in war. In extent Palestine scarcely equalled one of the least of modern European states, such as Belgium or Piedmont; nor was its soil naturally calculated to support a very dense population. It seems however that, partly from artificial cultivation, partly from foreign importations, it actually maintained more than proportionate numbers: Galilee alone, a district not larger than an English county, could boast of *numerous* cities, the least of which contained fifteen thousand inhabitants; and Josephus found himself there at the head of a hundred thousand armed men.[1] Exempted as the Jews had generally been from the levies imposed on the provinces, the flower of their youth had not been

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iii. 3. It must be observed, however, that this statement regarding the surprising populousness of Galilee should be accepted with caution. The numbers of Josephus are liable throughout to suspicion of great exaggeration. In some cases this is susceptible of proof, as will appear; in others, if I sometimes adopt his figures without remark, it may be understood that I do not on that account put any real confidence in them.

drained to recruit the cohorts on distant frontiers. But their kings had been required to maintain contingents within their own territories; and though the sceptre had departed from Judah, the country was still full of soldiers trained to service under the Herods and Agrippas. It had, moreover, been long infested by armed bands, who had coloured their brigandage with the name of patriotism, and might be not less formidable when arrayed under a truly national standard. The whole people recurred with instinctive alacrity to the traditions, still faithfully preserved, of its ancient military organization under Maccabæus, David, and Joshua. Arms were distributed to all who could bear them, and more, says Tacitus, claimed the honour of arming than in proportion to their numbers: the women were not less devoted than the men, and all agreed in the determination rather to die than be expelled, the only contemplated alternative, from their country.[1]

Josephus is harassed in his government by the intrigues of the Zealots.

Though the moderate party, of which Josephus was the instrument, was for the moment in the ascendant in the council at Jerusalem, he could not rely on its maintaining its power from day to day, nor could it secure its chiefs from being harassed by the Zealots with demands for more violent and uncompromising measures. If the governor of Galilee was satisfied with arming his militia, storing and fortifying his towns, and presenting to the Romans a dignified attitude of resistance, there were more vehement spirits at work around him, urging him to spoil and kill every doubtful partisan, and challenge the foe to a war of sanguinary reprisals. The Zealots of Galilee, who swarmed in every township, were stimulated by a countryman, John of Giscala, a man of great influence in Jerusalem, whom Josephus brands without

[1] Tac. *Hist.* v. 13.

reserve as a ruffian and a brigand. The historian has described to us how this opponent misrepresented all his actions, how he plotted against his life, corrupted the obedience of his people, and finally incited the council at Jerusalem to supersede him in his government.[1] In defeating these machinations Josephus seems to have employed great address, and we may the more readily believe his account from the vigour he unquestionably displayed in preparing for the defence of his province. It may be true that from the first he despaired of successful resistance to the Romans; his admiration of their policy, his awe at their military resources, were unworthy perhaps of the leader of a national insurrection, and helped to insure its defeat; nevertheless we must allow for the subjugation of men's minds, those especially of the most intelligent and thoughtful, by the long career of Roman invincibility. We must remember that the seeds of decay we can already trace in Roman discipline and conduct were not apparent to the generation with which we are now concerned: to them submission to Rome was prudence and philosophy, perhaps with some it was religion. The Zealots were so far in the right that the last faint hope of successful resistance lay in the rash valour of obstinacy and blindness.

Josephus defends Jotapata, and is captured by the Romans.

It was behind the walls of Jotapata that Josephus prepared to make his great stand for the defence of his province, which he declined to imperil by operations in the field. The exact position of this place is not known; but it is said to have been strong by nature as well as by art, and we may conjecture that it stood on one of the spurs of the hill-region of Galilee. While Vespasian was collecting his forces at Ptolemais, he had detached his lieutenant Placidus to make a de-

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iii. 21., *Vit.* 38. 40.

monstration against this fortress, but without result; and the general himself moved against it at a later period, with the main strength of his forces. The fidelity and courage of Josephus, who threw himself into the place, are sufficiently attested by his defence of forty-seven days, by the repulse of Placidus, the endurance of great extremities by famine, and the variety of resources with which he baffled the skill and perseverance of the enemy. Vespasian was forced to lead the assault in person, and suffered himself a wound. Josephus indeed admits, possibly to get favour with his conquerors, that for his own part he would have desisted earlier from a contest he knew to be hopeless; but when the obstinacy of his countrymen would listen to no compromise, he gallantly cast in his lot with theirs, and fought at their head till the place was finally stormed and captured. The account he gives of what followed savours strongly of deliberate imposture. He escaped, it seems, with thirty-nine of his comrades into one of the caves with which the region abounded; but his retreat was discovered to the Roman commander, who sent a friend to offer him his life. The fugitives, however, were exasperated and desperate; they would not suffer their chief to capitulate. Their cave was inaccessible to an armed force; but the Romans could have lit a fire at the entrance, and stifled them with the smoke. Vespasian, it is said, was anxious to get possession of Josephus alive, and forbade this to be done. The fanatics, however, resolved to kill themselves by mutual slaughter, and Josephus could only persuade them to abstain from indiscriminate massacre, and draw lots in successive pairs, to fall each on the sword of the other. This plan, which it seems had been recommended to him in a dream, was adopted with enthusiasm, and, strange to relate, Josephus himself and another were left last, when all the rest had perished. He persuaded this

irresolute survivor to save both their lives by surrender, and the astute defender of Jotapata shelters his character for patriotism behind the manifest interposition of Providence.[1]

Nor, it seems, did the favour of Heaven stop here. Josephus was brought a prisoner to Vespasian, and it was announced to him that he should be sent as a pledge of victory to Nero. This he knew too well would be the certain prelude to his execution; but at this crisis he was inspired to predict to the Roman general the imperial fortunes which awaited him. Vespasian, whose ear was ever open to pretenders to supernatural knowledge, listened and believed. Josephus secured his favour, and was carried about for some years by his conqueror in a custody which he had no inclination perhaps to evade. Admitted finally among the clients of the emperor's house, he adopted the name of Titus Flavius, and attached himself to his patron's retinue at Rome.[2]

Josephus secures the favour of Vespasian.

By the capture of Jotapata and the governor of the province the resistance of Galilee was completely broken. Vespasian returned with his victorious army to Ptolemais before the end of June, and thence removed to Cæsarea on the Mediterranean, where the Greek population urged him, but without success, to sacrifice his distinguished prisoner. With two legions now stationed at this place, and two advanced to Scythopolis in the interior, he cut off the communications of Galilee

Reduction of Galilee and capture of Joppa.

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iii. 7. It seems to have been an object with Josephus to recommend himself to the credulous Vespasian as a man favoured with visions and prophetic inspiration. The story in the text was, I have no doubt, fabricated with this view.

[2] At the close of the war Josephus received grants of land in Judea from the conqueror, together with an annual pension and the Roman franchise. Joseph. *Vit.* 76. "À chacun selon ses œuvres," says Salvador, bitterly contrasting this gilded servitude with the fate of the real patriots of Jerusalem. Salvador, ii. 467.

with Judea, and was enabled to carry on at leisure the pacification of the northern districts. The only maritime place retained by the Jews was Joppa, where they had mustered a naval force for the annoyance of the Romans, whose supplies came, we must suppose, in a great measure from Egypt. The Romans sent a detachment to occupy the town, which made no resistance, the people taking to their ships. A storm dashed their armaments in pieces, and all that escaped the sea were massacred on shore. The town was destroyed, and a garrison established amidst its ruins, to prevent the recovery of its convenient roadstead.[1]

Capture of Tiberias and Tarichea.

The tactics of Vespasian were slow and cautious. He was prepared to devote more than one campaign to making sure his ground before advancing to the assault of Jerusalem. In the course of this summer he conferred with Agrippa at Cæsarea-Philippi, to arrange perhaps the best mode of co-operation with the most powerful dependent of the empire, and the tetrarch, who well knew where his own interests lay, displayed his zeal in the Roman cause by a series of sumptuous entertainments. His sister Berenice, since the death of a first husband and her own desertion of a second, had continued to reside with him, and rumours prevailed about the character of their connexion more revolting to western ears than to eastern.[2] If we may believe the statement of Josephus, Berenice must have been thirty-nine years of age at this time, when she became perhaps first known to Titus, twelve years her junior: we shall find that ten years later he was even then passionately enamoured of her.

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iii. 8.

[2] Juvenal, vi. 158.: "Barbarus incestæ dedit hunc Agrippa sorori." After the death of Herod, king of Chalcis, A. D. 48, Berenice was united to Polemo, king of Cilicia. She was living with Agrippa A. D. 60, when St. Paul appeared before them at Cæsarea.

But the Roman general was still conducting his operations with unremitting activity. In August Tiberias surrendered, and Tarichea was stormed in September. The capture of this last place was followed by an appalling atrocity, for which we can discover no excuse, nor was any advanced for it. Josephus relates with little emotion that the whole population was collected in the Stadium, the infirm and old, twelve hundred in number, were at once put to death, six thousand of the younger were sent to work at the cutting of the Isthmus, the rest, to the number of thirty thousand, were sold publicly as slaves.[1] Doubtless the barbarity of the Romans, if it was really such as is here represented, was not unprovoked by similar excesses on the part of their opponents; and henceforth we shall find both sides rivalling each other in remorseless bloodshed, whenever opportunity offered.[2] In no work are the hideous features of ancient warfare so nakedly portrayed as in the pages of the Jewish historian. With the end of the year all northern Palestine had fallen into the hands of the conquerors, and John of Giscala, who had proved incapable of replacing the governor he had denounced as a traitor, had sought refuge in Jerusalem: *so God willed it*, says his opponent, *for the destruction of the city.*[3]

Second campaign of Vespasian. Reduction of Peræa.

A. D. 68. A. U. 821.

The campaign of 68 was conducted by Vespasian on the same principles as the preceding. He still refrained from any attempt on Jerusalem, and when urged to strike at the head of the Jewish confederation, already weakened

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iii. 9. 10. I have already given a caution with regard to the habitual exaggeration of Josephus. He was disposed to magnify the sufferings of the Jews, in excuse for his own temporizing counsels. It should be remembered that his history, composed in Greek, was not written for the Romans.

[2] Josephus, in his bitter enmity towards the chiefs of the Zealots, had a strong motive to make the worst of their misdeeds.

[3] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iv. 1. 10., iv. 2. 3.

by intestine divisions, he replied that it was best to leave nothing to chance, and to let the success of his operations be worked out by the hands of his opponents. Two officers, Placidus and Trajanus, the father of the future emperor of that name, ravaged the district beyond Jordan, and drove multitudes of its houseless people towards the treacherous defences of the capital. Urging before them all their flocks and herds, as in the great national migration of seventeen centuries before, the fugitives were arrested by the swollen waters of the river, and massacred with frightful slaughter.[1] But many thousands still escaped to swell the throng, which was destined to be cooped within the capital when at length the Roman armies approached it. Vespasian was at the same time drawing on from the opposite quarter; and his progress, as before, was marked with flames and devastation, and almost incredible bloodshed. His outposts were advanced to Jericho; but in the middle of the year he withdrew from active operations, fixing himself at Cæsarea, and listening for the first report of the impending revolutions in the West, while Titus was sent to confer with Mucianus at Antioch, and discuss matters of deeper interest to both father and son, than the means to be employed for reducing a provincial capital.

Suspension of hostilities during the struggle for the succession. A. D. 69. A. U. 822.

During all the following year warfare was suspended on the part of the Romans. Confiding perhaps in the omens and prophecies which assured him of the eventful succession, Vespasian seems to have watched the rise both of Galba and Otho, without faltering in his own anticipations, and to have reserved the strength of his legions for the crisis evidently approaching. By Mucianus in Syria, by Tiberius Alexander in Egypt, by Agrippa and Berenice in

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iv. 8.

the centre of Palestine, his interests were diligently served, and in the year 69, as we have seen, he was saluted emperor by his troops, and irrevocably launched on the career of ambition. It was arranged that Mucianus should conduct the war against Vitellius in Europe, that Vespasian should seize in person the granaries of Egypt, that Agrippa should betake himself to Rome, and intrigue for him with the nobles in the capital; while to Titus was committed the charge of the contest in Palestine, which his father, still faithful to the traditions of the service, would not consent to abandon even with the empire in view.

Sources of Jewish history misappreciated by Tacitus.

The admiration our Jewish historian has expressed for the power and greatness of Rome stands remarkably in contrast with the scornful disparagement of the Jews in which his Roman rival indulges.[1] Of the narrative of the war, as it was written by Tacitus, we possess a fragment only. The *Histories*, the first of his longer works, commence with the consulship of Galba in 69, and the author, preserving strictly the annalistic form he had prescribed himself, reviews in a few lines only the circumstances of the war in question, as conducted up to that date by Gallus and Vespasian.[2] The year 69, he says, was devoted to the civil contest, and no hostile movement was attempted by Titus until peace was restored at home, and the empire had finally passed into the hands of

[1] Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* iii. 5.) gives an interesting account of the Roman armies, adding: *ταῦτα μὲν οὖν διεξῆλθον οὐ Ῥωμαίους ἐπαινέσαι προαιρούμενος τοσοῦτον, ὅσον εἴς τε παραμυθίαν τῶν κεχειρωμένων, καὶ εἰς ἀποτροπὴν τῶν νεωτεριζόντων.*

[2] Tac. *Hist.* v 10.: "Duravit tamen patientia Judæis usque at Gessium Florum procuratorem. Sub eo bellum ortum, et comprimere cœptantem Cestium Gallum, Syriæ legatum, varia prœlia, ac sæpius adversa, excepere. Qui ubi fato aut tædio occidit, missu Neronis Vespasianus fortuna famaque et egregiis ministris (e. g. the father of Trajan), intra duas æstates cuncta camporum, omnesque præter Hierosolyma urbes, victore exercitu tenebat."

his father. It is from this point that his own narrative commences, and this is again broken off, after a few introductory chapters, by the accident which has deprived us of the remainder of the work.[1] We may conjecture, indeed, that in the later composition to which he gave the name of *Annals*, in which he traced the earlier history from Tiberius to Nero, the story of the first campaigns was supplied, and occupied under its proper years the important place it merited. But this portion of the Annals also is lost, and the Roman account of the most terrible conflict of the empire appears as a mutilated trunk, boldly designed and colossal in proportions, but shorn of the head and limbs, the beginning and the conclusion. Thus disappointed we look with the more interest to a sketch preserved us of the antiquities of the Jewish nation, from which we derive at least an insight into the spirit in which Tacitus approached his subject, and the estimate he may be supposed to have formed of that people's character. With the works of Philo and Josephus, not to mention the sacred records of the Jews, within his reach, it must strike us with surprise that so grave a writer should be content to refer, for the instruction of his countrymen, to the loose conjectures of Greek mythologers and fabulists. While there were thousands of native Jews and proselytes at Rome, instructed in the narrative of Moses, he preferred, it seems, to draw his information from the hostile Egyptians frequenting the camps of Titus and Vespasian, and swallowed without reflection the figments of Manetho and the pretended sages of Alexandria.[2] The story of the Jewish people, thus

[1] Tac. *Hist.* v. 1—13.

[2] Comp. Joseph. *c. Apion.* i. 25.: *τῶν δὲ εἰς ἡμᾶς βλασφημιῶν ἤρξαντο μὲν Αἰγύπτιοι· βουλόμενοι δὲ ἐκείνοις τινὲς χαρίζεσθαι, παρατρέπειν ἐπεχείρησαν τὴν ἀληθείαν, οὔτε τὴν εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἄφιξιν, ὡς ἐγένετο, τῶν ἡμετέρων προγόνων ὁμολογοῦντες, οὔτε τὴν ἔξοδον ἀληθεύον ες, κ. τ. λ.* He particularly instances Manetho and Chæremon as circulating falsehoods about the origin of the Jews, and these appear to have been the sources to which Tacitus chiefly referred.

communicated to Tacitus, is exposed to the scorn of their conquerors in such language as the following:—

Before relating the final destruction of this famous city, it will be well to explain its origin. The Judæi, it is reported, flying from the island of Crete, alighted on the farthest corner of Libya, at the period when Saturn was driven from his realm by Jupiter. This fact is established from their name: Ida is a famous mountain in Crete, and its people, the Idæi, became denominated with a barbaric extension of the sound, Judæi. Some relate that in the reign of Isis a multitude of people, overflowing the limits of Egypt, cast themselves on the neighbouring countries under chiefs named Hierosolymus and Judas. Others again assert that the Jews were a swarm of Ethiopians, driven by internal animosities to flee their country in the days of Cepheus. Again it is related that certain wanderers from Assyria, in quest of lands, occupied a part of Egypt, and quickly possessed themselves of Hebrew towns and territories, and the regions bordering upon Syria. Finally, another tradition assigns them a nobler origin, declaring that their city Hierosolyma was built and named by the Solymi, the (Lycian) people celebrated by Homer.[1]

Tacitus's strange misrepresentation of the origin of the Jews and the character of their religion.

The idea present to the writer's mind in regard to all these derivations, except the last, was that the Jews were properly no nation at all, but only the scum and offscouring of a nation, and as such were entitled to none of the observance due, by the comity of nations, to the acknowledged lords of earth. It was only by establishing their descent from an Homeric people as Tacitus, perhaps reluctantly, suggests, that they could pretend to claim in their favour the protection of international law as understood by antiquity.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* v. 2.

Most writers agree, he continues, *that a loathsome skin-disorder once prevailing in Egypt, king Bocchoris was commanded by the oracle of Hammon to purge his realm of this brood of people, and dismiss them to other lands, as hateful to the gods. Thus brought together and abandoned in the desert, when the rest were overwhelmed with their distress, Moses, one of the exiles, exhorted them to expect no help from gods or men, but to trust in him as a divine leader . . . . They consented, and commenced their journey at random, with no idea whither they were going, or with what object. Nothing so distressed them as the want of water. And now they were reduced to the last extremity, and flung themselves in despair upon the ground, when a herd of wild asses was seen making its way from feeding to a hill covered with wood. Moses followed, expecting them to lead to some grassy spot, and discovered abundant springs under their guidance. Thus refreshed, the fugitives completed a journey of six days, and on the seventh took possession of lands, driving out their owners, where they founded their city, and consecrated their temple. To make himself a nation for the time to come, Moses appointed them new rites, opposed to those of all mankind besides. Among them every thing elsewhere sacred is held profane; to them all things are lawful which among us are forbidden. They have consecrated in their temple a figure of the brute by the guidance of which they slaked their thirst and found their way in the desert; and they sacrifice rams there, on purpose, it should seem, to cast insult upon Hammon.*[1] *They slay the ox also,*

[1] Tac. *Hist.* v. 4.: "Effigiem animalis, quo monstrante errorem sitimque depulerant, penetrali sacravere." The writer cannot mean to imply that the image of an ass was worshipped in the Jewish temple, for he says, immediately afterwards, that the fane was vacant. He had heard, perhaps, that such a figure was kept there as a votive offering. However the notion arose, the worship of an ass, or more properly of an ass's head, was long objected to the Jews by

which the Egyptians worship as their God Apis. They abstain from swine's flesh in memory of the plague of scabs from which they had suffered, to which that animal is subject. By numerous fasts they attest the long famine they endured, and their unleavened bread bears witness to the hurry in which they snatched their corn for their journey.

their opponents (see Joseph. *c. Apion.* ii. 6. 7.), and afterwards to the Christians. Tertull. *Apol.* 16.: Minuc. Felix, *Octav.* 28.

Recent excavations on the Aventine have discovered the representation, scratched on the wall, of a human figure with an ass's head, crucified, a man in the act of worshipping it, with the inscription: Ἀλεξάμενος, σέβεται θεόν. See the *Dublin Review* for March, 1857. This, it is conjectured, is a caricature of Christian worship, in accordance with the well-known statement in Tertullian. The head, however, is allowed to be more like that of a horse than of an ass. I may remind the reader of a passage in Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* viii. 64.), in which he says that Cæsar had a horse with human fore-feet, as represented in the statue before the temple of Venus. The story is copied by Suetonius (*Jul.* 61.) and Dion (lvii. 54.). The existence of such a statue, which every citizen must have seen daily, cannot be questioned, however absurd the popular notion about it which these writers so gravely embraced. But some lines in Statius (*Sylv.* i. 1. 84.) seem to throw light on the subject. Comparing the equestrian statue of Domitian with that of Cæsar, he says:—

"Cedat equus Latiæ qui contra templa Diones
Cæsarei stat sede fori, quem traderis ausus
Pellæo, Lysippe, duci; mox Cæsaris ora
Aurata cervice tulit."

I venture to suggest that this work of Lysippus was the man-horse in question, and was symbolical of Alexander's power or divinity. Cæsar carried it off from Syria, and replaced the head of the rider with his own. Mionnet, *Médailles Antiques*, Supplement, tom. v. art. 861., thus describes a coin of Nicæa:—

"M. ANT. ΓΟΡΔΙΑΝΟϹ. ΑΥ. Tête radiée, avec un bouclier et un javelot sur l'épaule droite.

"Revers: ΙΠΠΟΝ. ΒΡΟΤΟΠΟΔΑ. ΝΙΚΑΙΕΩΝ. Héros à cheval, la tête couverte du bonnet Phrygien, et tenant de la main droite une couronne. Le cheval, *dont les pieds de devant sont humains*, tient dans le droit levé un bâton ou sceptre, autour du quel est un serpent, et sa queue repliée se termine par une tête de serpent [comp. *Apocal.* ix. 19.: *αἱ γὰρ οὐραὶ αὐτῶν ὅμοιαι ὄφεσιν ἔχουσαι κεφαλάς*]; une petite Victoire vole au devant du héros pour le couronner."

In Creuzer's *Religions de l'Antiquitè* (Guignaut) I find (i. i. p. 190.), that Vishnu is expected to appear in his tenth avatar on horseback or, as some say, with *a horse's face and a human figure*, for the final punishment of sin.

The seventh day, they say, was appointed for rest, because they then ceased from their miseries, and from thence they have gone on to indulge themselves with a cessation from labour every seventh year also. Others affirm that this is done in honour of Saturn: whether because they got the rudiments of their cult from the Idæans, or because of the seven planets that sway the destinies of man, that of Saturn is loftiest and most potent. . . .

From the base origin of these gipsy wanderers it would follow, in the mind of Tacitus, that their destinies were vulgar and terrene. No God was their patron, no wonders were wrought for them; their rights were of no divine intuition, their usages were uninspired by a breath of superior intelligence. Their ceremonies, divested of the charm of immemorial mystery, were plain prosaic references to the most obvious phenomena of nature. In this, as in all other respects, the Jews, he would have maintained, were entitled to no indulgence from their conquerors, no sympathy from the intelligent and humane.

These fashions, he proceeds to say, *however they were introduced, are sanctioned by their antiquity: their other peculiarities are less innocent, and have prevailed through the evil disposition of the people themselves. The Jews have grown into a nation by the agglomeration of the worst of men from all quarters; and dogged as is their fidelity, prompt as is their sympathy towards one another, while towards all besides they exercise the hatred of avowed enemies,—refusing to eat or intermarry with them, however licentious in their connexions among themselves,—they have appointed circumcision for their distinctive bond of union. This token they exact of all who adopt their religion, and these they teach, as their first lesson, to despise their own divinities, and renounce their country, their kindred, and their friends. They are careful, however, to multiply their numbers, and count it a crime to put their*

kin to death: they believe, moreover, that the souls of those who die in battle or on the scaffold are immortal. Hence their lust of begetting and their scorn of dying. Like the Egyptians, they bury, and do not burn their bodies, and take the same interest as the Egyptians in preserving them: for both hold a like belief about the dead, though their ideas of divine things are directly opposed. For the Egyptians adore various animals, and their visible images; the Jews conceive of God mentally, and as one only. Profane, they say, are those who fashion a figure of the Deity with perishable materials, after a human likeness: the Deity is supreme and eternal, nor can It change, nor is It liable to perish. Accordingly they suffer no images in their cities, nor even in their temples. They concede no such flattery to kings, no such compliments to Cæsars. But because their priests played on pipes and timbrels, and wore ivy garlands, and a golden vine was found in their temple, some have thought that Father Bacchus, the conqueror of the East, was worshipped by them, though their usage bore little resemblance to his: inasmuch as Bacchus instituted brilliant and joyous rites, but the ceremonial of the Jews is pitiful and sordid.[1]

There is the less cause to regret the loss of Tacitus's account of the war.

These studied insults towards a vanquished enemy, this ungenerous perversion of facts to blast his character, and repel his claims to justice and compassion, must not be passed over without notice. The author's determination to paint the rites of Judaism in the worst colours, so different from the light in which his countrymen had been wont to regard them, is not more odious than his insensibility to the sublimity of its dogmas, and the purity of its moral teaching.[2] Whether he

[1] Tac. *Hist.* v. 5.: "Judæorum mos absurdus sordidusque."

[2] It may be remembered that Strabo's account of the origin and teaching of the Jews (xvi. 2. p. 761, 762.) is far more dignified and candid than that of Tacitus. This later change of sentiment to-

echoed the ravings of popular hostility, or enrolled himself among the flatterers of the Roman court, we must equally deny him a love of truth and concern for justice. We shall the less regret the chance which has deprived us of his narrative of the Jewish war, in which the absence of candour and a just appreciation of the enemy was no doubt ill-redeemed by painting, however brilliant. Tacitus, it may be feared, was incapable of understanding the burning zeal and solemn enthusiasm which marked the most soul-stirring struggle of all ancient history.

Vigour of the religious sentiment among the Jews at this epoch.

Whatever was the moral corruption of the Jewish people at this epoch, however deep the degeneracy of feeling which blinded them to the spiritual character of the promises already fulfilled among them, their faith in the national creed was not perhaps the less intense than in the days of their purity and simplicity. Sufferings had cherished and not extinguished it; for these sufferings had always been accompanied with hope, and the whole genius of Judaism was fitted to keep alive the expectation of deliverance. The repetition, day by day, of the Psalms and Prophecies charmed away the advances of despair and despondency. Nor can we doubt that the concentration of their faith on One God gave peculiar vigour to the religious sentiment among them. Monotheism is more enthusiastic than Polytheism: it assures men of a closer connexion with the Deity; it may rush into the excesses of fatalism or fanaticism, but it stands a strain of temporal discouragement which would break asunder all the bands of idolatry and superstition. No polytheist could comprehend the principles which animated the Jew at this eventful epoch; least of all a polytheist of the Roman aristo-

wards them, which may be remarked also in the tone of popular literature at Rome, is well worthy of notice.

cracy; one who had renounced all vital faith himself, and trusted in no higher intelligence than his own. The strength of this people's convictions is shown by their stedfast rejection of the pretensions of magic, which their religion strenuously denounced. Tacitus himself remarks the absence among them, most strange as it must have seemed to him, of those expiatory rites by which the heathen avowed his terrors in the face of prodigies and omens. In this sturdy abnegation of the resources of feebler minds he might have discovered the genuine fervour of the faith which animated the people he so ungenerously calumniated.[1]

The Jews in the view of Christians, judicially abandoned to their selfish passions.

There is another point of view, however, which the heathen philosopher could not seize, from which the Christian must regard the position of the Jews. Whether we consider their sin to have lain in their carnal interpretation of prophecy, or in their rejection of truth and godliness in the person of Jesus Christ, they were judicially abandoned to their own passions, and the punishment which naturally awaited them. Though contending for a noble principle, as apostles of national liberty, the Zealots were not cordially supported by the mass of their own people: a large majority of the Jews would doubtless have acquiesced, however reluctantly, in the Roman dominion; still more would have been content to temporize; but the minority were the fiercest and the strongest in will;

[1] Tac. *Hist.* v. 13.: "Evenerant prodigia, quæ neque hostiis neque votis piare fas habet gens superstitioni obnoxia, religionibus adversa." Exception must be made for private adventurers, such as the exorcists in *Acts*, xix. 13. (comp. Justin Martyr, *c. Tryph.* p. 311.: ἐπορκισταὶ τῇ τέχνῃ), who seem to have been generally Jews resident abroad. A strange passage in Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* xxx. 2.) speaks of the magic of the Jews at Cyprus, connecting it, by a mere conjecture apparently, with Moses: "Est et alia magices factio, a Mose etiamnum et Lotapea Judæis pendens, sed multis millibus annorum post Zoroastrem. Tanto recentior est *Cypria*."

they could not persuade but they would not yield, and they enforced their determination upon the multitude by threats and violence. The Zealots have not inaptly been compared with the Montagnards of the French revolution, driven by their own indomitable passions to assert the truths which possessed them, with a ferocity which no possession can justify.

Revolutionary proceedings of the Zealots in Jerusalem.

The reduction of Galilee and Peræa had driven numbers of the rural population within the walls of Jerusalem, the only stronghold which now seemed capable of protecting them. Among the rest, John of Giscala, as we have seen, had abandoned the defence of his native city, escaping from it before it had yet fallen, and had thrown himself with the most violent of his partisans into the capital. To the charge of cowardice with which the opposite faction, ill-pleased at his reappearance, assailed him, he replied that it was necessary to concentrate the forces of the nation, and compel the enemy to come to the attack of the impregnable fortress they had so long shrunk from. But this influx of strangers, scared from their judgment, and with nothing more to lose, was fatal to the supremacy of the Moderate party in the city, who already maintained their position with difficulty. The views of the Zealots were not directed against the Romans only: they aimed at a complete revolution in the government at home, and as long as the invader was still distant, postponed every other care to an intrigue for exterminating their rivals, and grasping the helm of state. Under the guidance of the daring demagogue, Eleazar, they introduced bands of ruffians into the city, who filled the streets with tumult and disorder, and seized the person of Antipas, a kinsman of Agrippa, and with him a number of the chief nobility. Apprehending that they should not be able to retain these victims

in custody, the chiefs of the faction resolved to destroy them without form of trial, and pretending that they were in communication with the Romans, introduced a band of cutthroats into the prison, and put most of them to the sword.[1] The populace, still generally attached to their natural leaders, were cowed by the audacity of the act, and looked on with passive amazement. The Zealots proceeded to declare the vacancy of some priesthoods appropriated to noble families, and conferred them on obscure creatures of their own.

Thus insulted and menaced, Ananus, and such of his associates as had escaped assassination, appealed at last to the people, and organized the friends of order, including, no doubt, some secret adherents of Rome, against the terrorists, as a common enemy. The Zealots, menaced in their turn, but more prompt and audacious, seized the strong enclosure of the Temple, and established themselves within it. From thence they made various sallies against their opponents; their fanatical ardour overmatched the better discipline of the state militia; but they were far inferior in numbers, and were still confined, for the most part, to their defences, while Ananus, though he pushed his troops within their outer lines, shrank from turning his arms against the holy place in which they sheltered themselves. The Zealots were utterly unscrupulous. They had employed assassination; they now contemplated massacre. They treated with the turbulent banditti, who, expelled from their homes in the southern districts of Judea, were now roaming the country, and these, twenty thousand in number, rushed to the gates of the city, which they found closed against them. On the occurrence, however, of a tremendous tempest,

They massacre the Moderate party, and assume the government.

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iv. 3. 5.

which threw the government off its guard, the revolutionists contrived to introduce them within the walls, and joining with them, attacked their opponents unawares with murderous effect. Ananus was among the first victims, and with him fell most of the leaders of his party. Eleazar and his confederates issued in triumph from their fastness, seized the reins of government, and completed the carnage of the day with a series of judicial executions.[1] The extreme party now reigned unresisted in Jerusalem. Jehovah, they proclaimed, had manifestly declared Himself on their side. Judea stood once more erect and independent, and invited her children dispersed throughout the world to fulfil, by a common effort, her imperial destiny. But in Rome they had been crushed; in Alexandria they were baffled; Nero had cajoled Vologesus, and engaged him to control their movements in Ctesiphon and Seleucia; the summons of the patriots met, it seems, with no response beyond the confines of Palestine, and the army of Titus confronted in closed lists the defenders of the city of David.

The Zealots, in three factions, occupy the city.

There was still a short interval ere the eagles were advanced in sight, and the *abomination of desolation* stood in the Holy Place.[2] While the chiefs of the Roman army were occupied with manœuvres for securing the empire, the leaders of the Jews were actively engaged in plotting against each other. The Zealots, in the moment of victory, were split into three factions. Eleäzar, at the head of the residents of Jerusalem, still held his strong position in the inner enclosure

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iv. 4.

[2] St. Matt. xxiv. 15.: βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. See Grotius in loc.: "Non dubito βδέλυγμα vocari signa Romanorum militaria." The τόπος ἅγιος, or "holy place," according to the same interpreter, includes the tract of country between the city and the hills which stand round about it.

of the Temple; but John of Giscala, who had refused to join in the recent massacres, and had received the adhesion of a portion of the population, now shocked and remorseful at the deeds they had committed, succeeded to the lodgment of Ananus in its outer precincts. Simon Bargiora, who had held the fortress of Massada on the Asphaltic lake during the late campaigns, now entered the city with a third army, and posted himself on the opposite hill of Zion, from whence he conducted the defence of the common ramparts. John and Simon might dispute the superiority in numbers and equipment; but the stronghold of Eleazar was regarded by the Romans as the real citadel of Jerusalem. After many open attacks and secret stratagems, John contrived to assassinate this powerful rival, and obtained possession of the whole Temple with the eminence on which it stood. Henceforth the contest was narrowed to two competitors, who consented to waive hostilities only on the approach of the foreign armies to their walls.[1]

Topography of Jerusalem.

From the edge of the high country which intervenes between the Mediterranean and the Jordan valley, swells out a broad projection, inclining generally to the southward, and terminating abruptly by deep converging ravines.[2] Before plunging into these hollows, it rises in more than one distinct knoll, and, contrary to the usual configuration of such spurs of hills, the highest of

[1] Tac. *Hist.* v. 12.: "Tres duces, totidem exercitus. Extrema et latissima mœnia Simo . . . . mediam urbem Joannes, templum Eleazarus firmaverat. Multitudine et armis Joannes ac Simo, Eleazarus loco pollebat." Josephus explains their positions more definitely. *Bell. Jud.* v. 1.

[2] The highest elevation of this tongue of land is said to be 2200 feet above the sea. Mr. Stanley has expressed clearly what preceding describers had failed to signalize, that the plateau of Jerusalem is generally above the level of the surrounding country. *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 169.

these is nearest to its extremity. This conspicuous eminence the Jews, at least after their return from the Captivity, distinguished with the sacred name of Zion.[1] Here they pointed out the reputed tomb of their favourite sovereign David; here was the royal palace of Herod described with such enthusiasm by the Jewish historian, around which clustered perhaps the mansions of the nobles; the buildings on this summit were designated as the Upper City, encircled with a wall which crowned the brow of the hill. Eastward of Zion, and separated from it by a hollow, now scarcely distinguishable, called the Tyropœon, or cheesemarket, rose another eminence, sloping gradually from the north till it dipped into the valley of Jehoshaphat, with an escarpment of two hundred feet.[2] The temple of Jerusalem, planted nearly on the southern extremity of this second hill, was completely overlooked by Zion, and also by the fortress Antonia, with which Herod protected it on its northern flank. Beyond this fortress the ground still rose to the northward, though lowered to some extent artificially, and received the name of Acra to indicate its marked elevation, though the buildings

[1] Such is the name given to this hill in modern times, in conformity with the description in the Book of Maccabees, and apparently with the common usage of the Jews after the Captivity. It is remarkable that the name is never mentioned by Josephus or the writers of the New Testament, who were aware, perhaps, that its application was erroneous, and that the original Zion, on which stood the city of David, was the opposite height of the Temple. This transposition of the name (see Fergusson's *Essay*, and Thrupp's *Ancient Jerusalem*) seems to furnish an important key to the topography of that city. I have no special qualifications myself for determining the merit of this view, on which a more competent witness, Mr. Stanley, gives no decided opinion. (*Sinai and Palestine*, p. 172.) The reader will, however, expect some aid in following my description, and I have furnished him with the best plan I can exhibit of ancient Jerusalem, being a slight modification of Kiepert's.

[2] Josephus declares, in his usual spirit of exaggeration, that the depth of the valley beneath the eastern front of the Temple was 400 cubits or 600 feet. *Antiq. Jud.* xx. 8. 7.

upon it were denominated the Lower City, in contradistinction from the Upper City of Zion.[1] Acra, or Moriah, as it has been called by a vulgar error, might thus represent the Capitoline, and Zion the Palatine at Rome: the depression between them, crossed by a bridge or causeway, was thronged with the dwellings of the lowest classes, and occupied the place of the Velabrum or the Suburra. A second rampart, issuing from the northern face of the wall of Zion, and after running northwards some hundreds of yards, sweeping round to the eastward and returning along the ridge above Jehoshaphat, connected the two hills together with a continuous line of defences. The hill of Zion was almost a perfect square: but Acra, more oblong in shape, overlapped it considerably to the north-east, and in the rectangle between them, a third hill, to which we may give the name of Calvary, rose a little lower than the one, and as much higher than the other. The venerable tradition which assigns this spot for the place of our Lord's crucifixion, and has consecrated it with the existing church of the Holy Sepulchre, may be accepted with reasonable confidence. At the date of the Crucifixion it stood outside the walls; but Herod Agrippa undertook to enclose it, together with a large suburb to the north, in a third line of defences. Bezetha, or the New City, for so it was denominated, embraced an area towards the north and north-east, fully equal to all the rest of Jerusalem together. The metropolis of Judaism was thus completed, after the type of Antioch or Alexandria, in three several quarters,

[1] The hill of Acra is described by Josephus as ἀμφίκυρτος, "gibbous," or "pointed at the extremities with convex sides,"—a word which is applied elsewhere to the moon in her third quarter; it represents very fairly the configuration of the hill, popularly called Moriah, on which the Temple stood. Thrupp, p. 36. Moriah, according to this author, means no special hill, but a certain hill-country. See p. 46.

separated from each other by distinct walls, but surrounded by an exterior fortification. On three sides it was defended by deep ravines, and its ramparts were piled up from the bottom, or elevated on the brow of nearly perpendicular precipices; but its northern face was level with the country beyond, and on this, the only accessible quarter, the attack of the Assyrians in ancient times, and of the Romans under Pompeius had been directed. The works of Agrippa were planned on a vast scale, to strengthen the city on its vulnerable side; but the Romans had jealously interfered. In some places the walls had scarcely risen from their foundations when he was forbidden to proceed with them. But they had been carried on hastily by the Sanhedrim in the first years of the insurrection, and the fortifications were completed, though not perhaps in their full proportions, when the enemy appeared before them.[1]

Extent and population of Jerusalem.

The circuit of these exterior defences may have measured about four miles, and the ordinary population could scarcely amount to 200,000; but this number was vastly increased on occasion of the great festivals when the Jews thronged to their national temple from all quarters.[2] The inroads of the Romans into the rural districts of Galilee, Samaria, and Peraea had driven vast multitudes, as we have seen, to the capital for shelter, and as the spring of the year advanced, these were still further swelled by the influx of Paschal

[1] Joseph. *Antiq. Jud.* xix. 7. 2., *Bell. Jud.* v. 4. 2. Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 12.) says that after Agrippa's death the Sanhedrim had purchased the permission or connivance of Claudius for continuing the work. Thrupp, *Ancient Jerusalem*, p. 196.

[2] Josephus estimates the extent at thirty-three stades, which agrees very closely with the indications of the ground. See the Plan. In the time of Ptolemy Lagus, or at the founding of Alexandria, the population is computed by the same author (*contr. Apion.* i. 22.) at 120,000. The extent had doubled since that time; but some allowance should be made for his habitual exaggeration.

worshippers. Tacitus estimates at 600,000 the number enclosed within the walls at the period of the siege; and this estimate, great as it is compared with the extent of accommodation, is far less than what we might infer from certain statements of Josephus.[1] Within the rampart of this triple city were several places of strength. The citadel was the castle Antonia, so called by Herod in honour of his patron the Triumvir. The towers Hippicus, Phasaelus and Mariamne, with probably some others, were separate fortresses constructed for mutual support. The Temple itself, surrounded by an outer and inner wall, was capable of resisting very formidable attacks. It comprised an outer court of one stade or 600 feet each way, lined with double or triple porticos, and within this an inner area, subdivided into four compartments, and containing the shrine without an idol, the mysterious Holy of Holies. In extent and the grandeur of its proportions, as well as in decoration, this temple far exceeded any edifice of the kind in Rome: the outer court of the Capitol was only 200 feet square, and its inner cell no doubt proportionably diminutive. The palace of the kings of Judea I have already described as not less superior in magnificence to the abodes of Augustus and Tiberius.[2] The whole city, upon which many despots had lavished their wealth, as far sur-

Its citadel and towers.

The Temple.

[1] Eusebius states the number roundly at 3,000,000 (*Hist. Eccl.* iii. 5.), from a passage in Josephus, which will be referred to hereafter.

[2] The principal passages in Josephus for the description of the Temple are *Antiq. Jud.* xv. 11. 3. and *Bell. Jud.* v. 5. Comp. Tac. *Hist.* v. 12.: "Templum in modum arcis propriique muri, labore et opere ante alios: ipsæ porticus, quis templum ambiebatur, egregium propugnaculum. Fons perennis aquæ, cavati sub terra montes; et piscinæ cisternæque servandis imbribus: prævideraut conditores, ex diversitate morum, crebra bella." The cisterns and subterranean galleries, a marked feature of the spot, are described by all the topographers.

passed Rome, at least before Nero's restorations, in grandeur, as it fell short of it in size and population.

Titus conducts an army against Jerusalem. A. D. 70. A. U. 823.

With the closing days of the year 69 the empire had been won for the Flavian family, and its chiefs were now at leisure to direct all its forces against the two foreign foes who had so long profited by its divisions, and overwhelm the isolated revolts of Gaul and Judea. Vespasian, preparing to seat himself on the throne of the Cæsars, had instructed his son to open his fourth campaign with the investment of Jerusalem, every outer bulwark of which had been successively reduced by the operations of preceding years. Titus united four legions in this service, the Fifth, the Tenth, the Fifteenth, which were previously in the country, and the Twelfth from Syria, to which were added detachments of the Third and Twenty-second from Alexandria. Twenty cohorts of auxiliaries, with eight squadrons of cavalry, swelled his ranks, and he was joined by the contingents of Agrippa, Sohemus, and Antiochus king of Commagene, together with some bands of Arabs, between whom and the Jews there existed ancient feuds.[1] The numbers with which Vespasian had commenced the struggle have been computed at 60,000; it seems that the forces now led by Titus amounted to not less than 80,000. To these the Jews opposed, from behind their defences, 24,000 trained and well-armed soldiers; but these were supported by a multitude of irregular combatants, who rushed at every emergency, from the lanes and closes of the city, to man the walls or sally from the gates.[2]

[1] Tac. *Hist.* v. 1.; Salvador, ii. 385.

[2] Josephus states that 10,000 Jews and 5,000 Idumeans placed themselves under the orders of Simon; the remainder of the 24,000, of whom 3,000 are specially mentioned as the Zealots of Eleazar, were attached to John of Giscala. *Bell. Jud.* v. 6. 1.

Titus, advancing from the north, planted his camp on the ridge called Scopus, from whence the city was first discovered to the view.[1] The Tenth legion was detached to take up its position on the Mount of Olives, to prevent escape and intercept succour on the side where alone they were to be apprehended.[2] But the Jews did not allow the enemy to form his lines unmolested. Some bloody combats took place before the defenders of Jerusalem consented to retire finally within their walls.[3] Aware of the strength and resolution of his opponents, aware also that he had three distinct lines of rampart to force, and two citadels to master, the Roman leader prepared to conduct the siege, according to the rules of art, with the patience and perseverance not less requisite for success than bravery. It was necessary to advance men under cover of hurdles and extended skins to fill up the ditch with fascines, and to construct, almost in contact with the walls, huge banks of earth, supported by stones and stakes, till they reached the level of the ramparts. The face of these banks was as nearly as possible perpendicular; they sloped in the rear to afford easy ascent to the assailants. They were crowned, moreover, with towers, from which missiles of all kinds might be hurled by the strength of men's arms, or from engines adapted for the purpose.[4] Meanwhile

Operations of Titus against the outer wall, which is at last forced.

[1] Elevated as the position of Jerusalem is, it is nevertheless concealed from the traveller till within a short distance by an almost continuous amphitheatre of hills, which it does not everywhere overtop. From St. Elias, three miles to the south, from Olivet, or Scopus, it bursts upon him in all the majesty of its throne-like eminence. Hence the proud allusions in the Psalms and Prophecies to "the hill," "the mountain," "the throne," "the stronghold," of Jehovah.

[2] Dion (lxvi. 4.) says that the defenders of Jerusalem received succours from their brethren beyond the Euphrates.

[3] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* v. 2. 4.; Tac. *Hist.* v. 11.

[4] Valerius Flaccus, in the invocation of his poem, gives a picturesque description of Titus:—

the skill and spirit of the defenders were directed to overthrowing these constructions as fast as they were erected, and the mass of wood necessarily employed in them afforded aliment for fire. A successful sally enabled the Jews to get in the rear of these embankments, to attack the camp of the Romans, and destroy the munitions of war laid up for the service of the siege. The assailants were obliged to resume their operations with the mine and the battering-ram. The chambers they excavated beneath the walls were constantly countermined by the defenders; furious combats were waged in the darkness, and the miners were sometimes confounded by the attack of wild bears, and even of bees, let loose in the narrow galleries among them. The attempts to board the city from the banks, and to surprise it from underground, having equally failed, the battering engines were still plied with persevering resolution; stones and darts, boiling water and oil, were in vain poured down upon the covering which protected the assailants; at last the massive wall crumbled in dust before them, and the Romans stood triumphant within the outer line of defences.[1]

The population of Jerusalem overawed by the resolution of the Zealots.

Since the entire overthrow of the moderate faction the affairs of the Jews had been conducted with far greater vigour. The chiefs of the Zealots, ably seconded by their creatures, whom they had installed in all places of trust and honour, carried everything before them. Though, while the Romans were still distant, they had continued to quarrel among themselves, and one of them had fallen by the hands of a rival, from the first appearance of the enemy before

"Solymo nigrantem pulvere fratrem,
Spargentemque faces, et in omni turre furentem."

He was wounded in the left shoulder, and his hand continued weak in consequence. Dion, lxvi. 5.

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* v. 7. 2.

the walls all private contests had been suspended, and the operations of the defence, bold, skilful, and determined, had been carried on, at every gate and in every tower, with one heart and one mind. This unanimity in action was effected by the energy rather than the numerical strength of the dominant faction. Among the multitudes that crowded the streets of Jerusalem many no doubt were eager to escape from their fears and sufferings by instant submission; sentiments of honour, patriotism, and even religion succumbed before the pangs of destitution and the apprehension of approaching famine. The desperate resolution of their armed defenders had distressed rather than animated the unarmed populace. In the first instance Titus had attempted conciliation. He had sent Josephus to the foot of the gates to counsel submission, with the offer of honourable terms. But the chiefs of the army had not suffered him to be heard; they had driven him with bowshots from the wall. When the Romans after six weeks' toil found themselves still before the second rampart with a second and again a third siege in prospect, they determined to change their policy, and work on the fears of the besieged. They threatened to reduce them by blockade. Titus drew a line of circumvallation round the city, at a distance of one or two furlongs from the walls, which was completed by three days' continuous labour of the whole army.[1] The distress of the people, cut off from all external supply, increased rapidly. Multitudes rushed frantically to the gates, and flung themselves into the enclosed space without, imploring permission of the Romans to depart into the country without arms or baggage. But Titus sternly refused. To deter them from the attempt, and teach them that they had no hope but in surrendering the city, he ordered

The Roman circumvallation.

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* v. 12. 2.

the captives to be suspended on crosses round the walls, and continued for several days to inflict this cruel punishment upon all that fell into his hands.[1] The fugitives shrank back with piteous cries into the city, but their murmurs were unavailing; the chiefs and the soldiers maintained their dogged resolution, and in the midst of famine and pestilence, and the wailings of seers and prophets, still offered the daily prayers and performed the daily sacrifice in the Temple, invoking the Lord of Hosts to their aid, and looking for the promised Messiah.

Famine and portents.

The Romans continued to press the siege with repeated attacks upon the second wall and the citadel Antonia, and suffered many serious losses: they sent Josephus again, and again in vain, to induce the defenders to capitulate; but they trusted more in the effect of the blockade, which became daily more distressing. The Zealots, regardless of the sufferings of the people, made rigid perquisitions for the sustenance of their soldiers, and great was the horror which pervaded all ranks when their officers, led by the scent of sodden flesh to the chamber of the widow Maria, discovered in her dish the mangled limbs of the child she had murdered for her meal. At an earlier period, while the Romans were still admitted within the city, a crazy enthusiast known as Joshua, the son of Hanan, had stalked, as one possessed, through the public places, exclaiming, *Woe to Jerusalem!* Rebuked and scourged in the presence of the procurator, he had refused to give any account of himself or explain the meaning of his ill-omened cry: checked for a season he now resumed it more vehemently than ever, and continued

[1] The Romans seemed to have excused these atrocities by affirming that the fugitives from Jerusalem poisoned their water and killed their stragglers. Dion, lxvi. 5. At one time there was so much dejection in the camp of the besiegers that many of them deserted and took refuge in the besieged city.

to traverse the streets, repeating, *A voice of ruin from the East and from the West, from the North and from the South! a voice of ruin against the City and against the Temple, against the bride and the bridegroom, and against all the people!* Some listened to him with pity, some with fear; some thrust an alms into his hand; others scoffed and menaced him; but none ventured to punish him. Thus he went on wailing from day to day: at last he added to his list of woes, *Woe to me also!* At the same instant he was stricken with a stone from a Roman catapult, and fell dead on the ground.[1] The city was filled with reports of the fearful prodigies which were now remembered to have occurred before the outbreak of the present troubles; of comets and meteors, supposed to have announced the approaching downfall of the nation; men and chariots had battled in the air; the gates of the Temple had burst open of their own accord; and on the solemn day of Pentecost a voice *more than human* had been heard exclaiming, *Let Us depart hence!*[2]

The Christians retire from Jerusalem.

While, however, these portents struck terror into the hearts of the multitude, bolder spirits were not wanting among them, who consulted no omen but the voice of patriotism, and maintained that the nearer ruin impended, the nearer was the hour of deliverance. The day was at hand, they asserted, the day predicted in their priestly records, when the East should wax in power, and men go forth from Judea to rule the world. The Romans, listening credulously to every oracle, foreign or domestic, pointed with exultation to Titus and

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vi. 5. 3.

[2] Tac. *Hist.* v. 13.: "Expassæ repente delubri fores, et audita major humana vox, Excedere Deos: simul ingens motus excedentium." Comp. Joseph. *Bell. Jud. l. c.*: *πρῶτον μὲν κινήσεως ἀντιλαβέσθαι ἔφασαν καὶ κτύπου, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα καὶ φωνῆς ἀθρόας, μεταβαίνωμεν ἐντεῦθεν.* It is remarkable that both the Pagan and the Jewish writer make use of the plural number.

Vespasian, who issued from Judea to assume the government of the empire. Josephus, with a remnant of national feeling, or regard for the opinion of his countrymen, shrinks from interpreting the prophecy at all. The Christians, as is well known, have generally inclined to see in it an allusion to the Messianic visions of the elder prophets.[1] Indeed but a few weeks before a little band of outcasts, rich in faith, but bare of this world's goods, had gone forth from Jerusalem and Judea, on the first approach of the Romans, and taken refuge beyond the Jordan in Pella, a village of the Decapolis.[2] These were the disciples of Jesus Christ, who had set up their church, after his departure, in the Jewish capital, and who clung, even against the convictions of their more scattered brethren, to many prejudices of their ancient faith. But when the impending fall of Jerusalem opened their eyes to the Scriptures which were written for their warning, they broke the last bands of patriotism and superstition which attached them to the Temple and the Altar, and proclaimed themselves missionaries of the new faith, without a backward glance of lingering reminiscence.[3] Then it might be said that the prophecy was spiritually fulfilled: the preachers of Christianity went forth from Judea for the moral conquest of the empire and the

[1] Tac. *Hist. l. c.*; Suet. *Vesp.* 4.; Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* v. 4., who thinks fit to disparage the prophecy (probably Daniel, vii. 12, 15, 27, 28.): *τὸ ἐπᾶραν αὐτοὺς μάλιστα πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον ἦν χρησμὸς ἀμφίβολος, κ. τ. λ.* For the Christian interpretation it may be sufficient to refer to Paley and Lardner.

[2] Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 5.

[3] The Christians derived their warning from St. Matt. xxiv. 16. and St. Luke, xxi. 21.: *τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὰ ὄρη.* According to the modern Jewish view: "Les Chrétiens de l'école speciale de Josué ou Jésus de Nazareth, les Chrétiens-Nazaréens, se dégageaient alors du systême d'expectative et de défense particulier à la loi Juive: ils se transformaient en instrument organisè de propagande réligieuse et morale, de conquête, d'invasion." Salvador, ii. 23.

world. Much as we may admire the enthusiasm of the Jewish patriots, which does honour to our common humanity, still more freely may we sympathize with the inspiration of these soldiers of Christendom, who left father and mother, home and country, and all the associations on which they had fed from infancy, for the glory of God and the love of a spiritual Redeemer.

Titus captures the fortress Antonia, and invites the Jews to capitulate.

But disease and slaughter were thinning the Jewish ranks, and their numbers diminished even faster than their provisions. The Romans grew impatient of the delay. Again they pushed their engines to the walls, again they piled embankments against them, again they mined their foundations; while day by day the obstinate defenders overthrew their works and baffled their approaches. The perseverance with which Titus renewed his elaborate constructions after every failure was not less eminent than the fortitude of John and Simon. After every resource of skill had failed, Antonia was at last carried by surprise, and the Romans occupied the post which overlooked the Temple.[1] The siege had already lasted three months. Seven days were now employed in the destruction of the citadel, one wing only being reserved as a watch-tower. All the buildings round it were thrown down to make room for the works required for the attack on the Temple, and the Lower City was at the same time demolished. Titus had now relaxed from his earlier severity. Large numbers of the population received their lives on submission, while the more desperate fled for refuge to the Temple and to Mount Zion. He continued to press offers of accommodation on the remnant of the defenders; but these were still met with unabated defiance. Once more was Josephus put forward to confer with the people on the wall,

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vi. 1. 7. Antonia was taken on the seventeenth of Panemus, *i. e.* the beginning of July.

and entreat them to spare the holy place. He addressed them, like the Assyrian of old, in the Hebrew language that all might understand him; but John, perceiving (so at least Josephus assures us) the impression he was making, sternly interrupted him, declaring that they had nought to fear, for Jerusalem was the Lord's, and the Lord would protect it.[1]

The Zealots refuse to hearken to terms.

But Josephus, it might be imagined, was reputed a traitor, and was personally odious. The representations of the captives of the Lower City, now admitted to terms by their conquerors, might possibly be less obnoxious. Accordingly, a number of these people were ranged before the gates of the Temple and instructed to adjure their compatriots, with tears and prayers, to yield to a clement foe, and spare the cherished shrine of Jehovah from the ruin which must inevitably befall it. But the Zealots were obdurate. They erected their engines on the gate itself and poured from thence a shower of stones and darts, which strewed the terrace in front with bodies of their own countrymen, *as thick as a cemetery*.[2] The defenders of Jerusalem had now, in their despair, lost all respect for sacred things, as well as tenderness for their kindred. They flung open the recesses of the Temple, and carried on their operations regardless of religious usage, profaning the Holy of Holies with their unhallowed presence, and polluting with bloodstained hands the golden vines and the golden table.[3]

[1] Joseph. vi. 2. 1.: *ὡς οὐκ ἄν ποτε δείσειεν ἅλωσιν, Θεοῦ γὰρ ὑπάρχειν τὴν πόλιν.*

[2] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vi. 2, 3. Such is the comparison of our author: *ὡς τὸ κύκλῳ μὲν ἱερὸν ἀπὸ πλήθους νεκρῶν προσεοικέναι πολυανδρίῳ*: such a cemetery, I suppose he means, as the places in which the bodies of slaves and strangers were exposed or imperfectly buried, as in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and the Esquiline field at Rome.

[3] Joseph. *l. c.*: *τοῖς δ' ἁγίοις καὶ ἀβάτοις μετὰ τῶν ὅπλων εἰσεπήδων,*

The demolition of Antonia and its outer bulwarks had cleared the space required for works against the northern wall of the Temple, its position rendering it on every other side inaccessible. Taking his stand on the remaining turret of the fortress, Titus, having in vain expostulated with his opponents, and declared that he would save their holy place even in their own despite, directed the operations of his engineers, and gave the signal for assault. But his materials, often consumed and as often replaced, were now less abundant, and had to be drawn from a greater distance: if the defences of the Temple were less formidable than those of the outer city, the works advanced against them were perhaps proportionally slender: if the assailants were encouraged by success, the defenders were maddened by despair, and baffled all their attacks with unfailing resolution. Sometimes the Jews sallied from their strongholds and even crossed the vale of Kedron on their right, and dashed themselves in vain against the Roman circumvallation; again the Romans, in the darkness of the night, scaled the low rampart of the Temple, and effected a lodgment for a moment, only to be driven from it headlong, when the dawn revealed them to their enemies. On one occasion the defenders purposely evacuated the western gallery of their outer court, and allowed the Romans to climb into it. The stone pillars were surmounted with wooden beams and rafters, and in the space between these and the roof they had piled a mass of combustibles, to which they now set fire,

Operations directed against the Temple.

θερμὰς ἔτι τὰς χεῖρας ἐξ ὁμοφύλων ἔχοντες φόνων. The warmth of Josephus must be accepted with due qualification. The golden table and the enormous vines of the same metal are mentioned by Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* v. 5. 4.), among the most splendid objects within the Temple, after it had lost the Ark, the Mercy Seat, the Urim and Thummim and the Shechinah.

and consumed, along with the portico itself, a great number of their assailants.[1] But as the defence of the outer wall relaxed, the missiles of the besiegers became more effective. They continued to cast their brands into the enclosure; care was no longer taken to extinguish them as they fell, and at length the range of the northern portico, roofed also with wood, was wrapped in flames. It was now impossible to maintain the outer ramparts. John and Simon, with the best equipped of their followers, withdrew altogether from the Temple, and sought refuge in the Upper City, while retreat was still open. They crossed the connecting causeway, and then broke it down behind them. But the priests, the women, and the unarmed multitude paid no heed to this desertion. The flames which raged on two sides of the holy place seemed to their wild fanaticism a barrier set by God between Himself and the enemy. They crowded with frantic devotion within the second enclosure, and awaited their deliverance in grim security. Meanwhile Titus advanced his engines to the outer wall; but the strength of its compacted masonry still defied the battering-rams. He undermined the gates; his engines shook their sustaining bulwarks; but though the surface crumbled, the mass stood firm, and barred ingress. He applied ladders, and the Romans mounted without opposition. On the summit they were met by a remnant of defenders, who, still in the fury of their despair, found strength to hurl them headlong. Finally, the assailants brought fire to the gates, and, meeting again with no resistance, succeeded in melting the silver plates which cased them, and kindling the wood beneath. The flames now cleared the way for their advance, and swept from pillar to pillar, till they enveloped all that was yet standing of the interior porticos. The royal porch of

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vi. 3. 1.

Herod, with its double aisles and central nave, the noblest feature of the Temple, now blazed from end to end.[1] Hundreds of the Jews perished in this storm of fire. Titus called his chiefs together, and deliberated on the fate of the sanctuary. *Destroy it utterly*, exclaimed some; *retain it for ransom*, suggested others; but Titus himself, so at least we are assured by his panegyrist, was anxious at all events to save it. Perhaps he regarded it as a trophy of victory; possibly he had imbibed in his Eastern service some reverence for the mysteries it enshrined; and even the fortunes of his family disposed him to superstition.[2] He ordered the flames to be quenched; but while his soldiers were employed in checking them, the Jews sallied from their inner stronghold; a last struggle ensued. Titus swept the foe from the court with a charge of cavalry, and, as they shut the gates behind them, a Roman, climbing on his comrades' shoulders, flung a blazing brand through a latticed opening. The flames shot up; the Jews shrank, shrieking and yelling, from their parapets. Titus, roused from sleep to which he had for a moment betaken himself, commanded or implored his men to save their glorious conquest. But his voice was drowned in the tumult; his gestures were disregarded; the soldiers burst the gates or scaled the walls, and rushed in headlong, trampling in their frenzy upon one another, and hewing themselves a way through the shattered masses of the enemy. The stair of the Holy Place ran with torrents of blood, over which rolled the bodies of the dead; but the women and children, the old and helpless, had collected around the altar above it, and there was consummated the sacrifice, the bloodiest and the last of

[1] For the description of this southern portico, see Joseph. *Antiq.* xv. 11. 3. with Mr. Fergusson's explanation. Thrupp, p. 322.

[2] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vi. 4. 3.

the Ancient Covenant. Through the flames and smoke, over the dead and dying, Titus forced his way into the Holy of Holies, and gazed for a moment on the wonders, so vaunted by the Jews, so disparaged by the Gentiles, which neither Gentile nor Jew, the high priest alone excepted, was ever suffered to look upon.[1] Here the fire had not yet penetrated. He rushed forth to provide for its protection, urging his men, with words, and even with blows, to stay the advancing surges. But their fury was deaf, their cupidity was insensible; they had caught sight of gates plated with silver, windows lined with gold; the sanctuary, they had heard, was filled with unimaginable riches, and they feared to be baulked of their plunder. While their chief was still parleying with them, a soldier, who had pushed within the veil beside him and remained behind, applied a torch to the door, and enveloped the place in flames. Titus looked back with a sigh, but made no further attempt to save it. He withdrew despondingly from the spot, and the divine decree was accomplished.[2]

Titus enters the Holy of Holies.

Conflagration of the Temple.

The Jewish chronicler exhausts all his rhetoric in describing the horrors of the scene he had himself witnessed from the camp of the victors. The hill of the Temple was enveloped in a sheet of flame, and the whole city seemed to be involved in a general conflagration. The shouts of the conquerors, the shrieks of the victims, the groans and howls of a nation of spectators in the streets and on the hills surrounding Jerusalem, surpassed all horrors recorded or imagined. The chiefs, deluding their

The Zealots defend the Upper City.

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vi. 4. 6.: *πολὺ μὲν τῆς παρὰ τοῖς ἀλλοφύλοι φήμης ἀμείνω, τοῦ δὲ κόμπου καὶ τῆς παρὰ τοῖς οἰκείοις δόξης οὐκ ἐλάττω.*

[2] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vi. 4. 7. It will be seen that the most important treasures of the sanctuary had been previously removed by the priests, and fell afterwards into the hands of the conqueror.

followers to the last, had contrived, as we have seen, to escape the holocaust in the Temple. Behind the walls of the Upper City they stood again, however hopelessly, at bay. But their ramparts were strong, and to the north, where alone the nature of the ground rendered siege operations possible, a deep and broad ditch was excavated in the rock before them. Titus received the acclamations of his soldiers, who saluted him as imperator. He planted his standards at the eastern portal of the Temple, which was still standing, and performed his sacrifices before them; this done, he resumed his tedious work with admirable patience. Once more he charged Josephus to summon the malignants. The renegade was dismissed a last time without a hearing. He came forward in person to the chasm in the bridge, and the Jewish chiefs conferred with him from the other side. The Roman addressed them as an injured yet placable master. He offered life to such as should lay down their arms and acknowledge his authority. To such as persisted in their crime he threatened merciless punishment. The Zealots replied that they had sworn an oath never to surrender: let them pass freely through the gates with their wives and children, and they would abandon their city and betake themselves to the wilderness. Well indeed might they distrust their conqueror. A few unarmed priests, who had cowered among the ruins of the Temple, had just before descended, pressed by hunger, and thrown themselves on his mercy; they had been led straightway to execution, with the brutal sarcasm that those who live by the altar should perish with the altar.[1] On this refusal of the insurgents the imperator declared that the whole city should be razed to the ground, and began at once, in the quarters he held, the work of demolition.

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vi. 6. 1

Dissolution of order and discipline among the Jews.

But while preparations were making in the Roman quarters for the reduction of the last stronghold of the Jews, the defenders themselves had broken through all restraints of discipline, and the Upper City was abandoned to rapine and slaughter. Jealousy and discord reigned among the Jews; their chiefs surrendered to them every obnoxious citizen; and thousands were impelled to throw themselves into the hands of the enemy, who granted them for the most part life and liberty. An armed band seized the palace, repulsed an attack of the Romans, put to the sword the multitudes who had taken refuge in it, to the number, as we are told, of four thousand, and divided among themselves the treasures which had been lodged there. One Roman prisoner they slew, and dragged his body through the streets in impotent revenge for their own slaughtered myriads; another they bound for execution in the face of his countrymen, but he contrived to escape from their hands, and reached the Roman lines. It was reported as an instance of the sternness of the general's discipline, tempered by his personal clemency, that though he refrained from smiting with the axe the soldier who had suffered himself to be captured, he deprived him of his arms, and discharged him with ignominy from the service.[1]

Famine, massacres, and retreat into the vaults beneath the city.

But famine at last was doing the work of the besiegers more surely than the sword or the catapult. The blockade was strictly kept; provisions failed; the armed slew the unarmed to diminish the number of mouths, but their own strength no longer sufficed for a last attempt to break the lines of circumvallation. A gleam of hope still flickered in their bosoms. The limestone hills of Judea are perforated

[1] Joseph. vi. 7. 1.

with numerous caves and fissures, and the site of Jerusalem itself is mined with vaults and galleries, excavated by the hand of man. Here were the storehouses and granaries, the reservoirs and the sewers of the great city; narrow and winding passages led from hill to hill, from building to building beneath the walls, and into the valleys beyond them. It seemed possible to find here a means of exit: the labyrinth might at least afford an impenetrable hiding-place. John and Simon withdrew from the defence of the ramparts, and repaired with the most desperate of their followers to these subterranean retreats, while the Romans occupied the stronghold they had abandoned, and carried fire and slaughter through the streets of the Upper City. Overtaking the crowd of fugitives, fleeing, yet with no asylum to flee to, in these narrow avenues, they slew till they were weary of slaughter; then broke into the houses and loaded themselves with plunder till they could carry off no more. In some dwellings they discovered the bodies of whole families huddled together: hunger had anticipated the sword. From such places the fiercest warriors recoiled with horror, and rushed back into the streets empty-handed.[1]

The Romans enter the Upper City.

The Upper City perished in the flames, like the quarters which had been captured before. On the 8th of Gorpiæus, apparently an early day in September, five months and a half after the first investment, Jerusalem ceased to exist.[2] Titus himself advanced step by step through the blazing ruins, admiring the vast strength of the the defences, the solidity of the towers, the size of

Destruction of the Upper City by the Romans.

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vi. 8. 5.

[2] Dion (lxvi. 7.) asserts that Jerusalem was taken on the Sabbath day. He had said the same of its capture by Pompeius, and again by Sosius. Josephus, who would not have passed over such a coincidence, makes no mention of it. Norisius, who fixes the date to Sept. 2., proves that this was not the Sabbath.

the stones, and the nice adjustment of the masonry.[1] *God has been my helper*, he devoutly exclaimed,—unless, indeed, the words were ascribed to him by the uneasy conscience of the renegade,—*God it was that pulled down the Jews from those formidable walls; for what could the hands of men or their engines have availed against them!* While he gave orders for the complete destruction of the stronghold which had made so memorable a resistance to the forces of the empire, he directed that three of its towers should be allowed to stand as a monument of its strength, and of his perseverance.[2] With the same deliberation, and on similar principles, he proceeded to deal with the multitudes, who, after the fury of the victors was satiated, still remained to glut their pride or their cupidity. He decreed that those only who were found in arms and resisting should henceforth be slain; all who sued for quarter should be spared, collected together, and numbered. Yet when the tale was completed, the old and useless were passed in cold blood on the edge of the sword. The tallest and best looking were next chosen to grace the conqueror's triumph; of the rest all above the age of seventeen were drafted off to the quarries in Egypt, or condemned to fight with beasts in the theatres of Antioch and Cæsarea. All the children were sold as slaves. But the fierce animosity of the soldiers outran the barbarity of their officers, and

[1] At the bottom of the hills in some places, particularly below the area of the temple, there may now be seen some courses of stones of immense proportions, bevelled (that is, the junction between them grooved to some depth), giving a great appearance of solidity. It seems possible that these may be remains of the walls which Titus admired, and which Josephus remarked for their ἀκρίβεια τῆς ἁρμονίας, vi. 9. 1.

[2] The bases of the towers Hippicus and Phasael are believed by many topographers still to exist at the foot of certain turrets of the modern citadel of Jerusalem. Williams, art. *Jerusalem* in *Dict. Class. Geography.*

was met with equal exasperation on the part of the victims. Of the whole number, eleven thousand, if we may believe the most terrible story in Josephus, perished from starvation, some denied aliment by their keepers, others refusing to accept it.[1]

Capture of John and Simon.

Fierce and cruel as the leaders of the Jewish patriots had proved themselves, we could nevertheless have wished to learn that they too fell at last, sword in hand, on the last tower or behind the last breastwork of their city. But both Simon and John, as we have seen, had sought escape, or at least concealment, in its underground galleries; nor were they successful. John, pressed by hunger, came presently forth and surrendered himself openly to the conqueror. Simon had taken with him tools and workmen, as well as food, and laboured to excavate a passage till his supplies failed him. He then thought, in his last extremity to impose upon the Romans by contriving to rise arrayed magnificently in white or purple from the centre of the Temple platform. The awe or terror of the spectators soon abated when they saw, beneath the royal or priestly robes, the squalid features of their victim. Detected by a Roman officer, he was led bound to Titus. Both to the Romans and to his

[1] Joseph. vi. 9. 2.: *ἐφθάρησαν δ' αὐτῶν ἐν αἷς διέκρινεν ἡμέραις ὑπ' ἐνδείας χίλιοι πρὸς τοῖς μυρίοις, οἱ μὲν ὑπὸ μίσους τῶν φυλάκων μὴ μεταλαμβάνοντες τροφῆς, οἱ δ' οὐ προσιέμενοι διδομένην.* According to this author 90,000 Jews were made captives in the course of the whole war, a number which seems by no means excessive. But I cannot persuade myself to place in my text his enumeration of the victims of the siege, which he makes to amount to 1,100,000. This estimate, he adds, will not appear extravagant when we remember that the multitudes which flocked to Jerusalem for the passover were shut up in the city, and that the priests, when interrogated by Cestius about the number of their people, had calculated the number of Paschal lambs in a given year at 256,500, and the number of communicants, at little more than ten to each, at 2,700,000. vi. 9. 3. Comp. Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 5. The physical impossibility of such numbers being accommodated within the area of the city has been often demonstrated.

countryman Josephus he seems to have been more particularly obnoxious than his colleague. While John was granted his life, and kept without public disgrace in perpetual confinement, Simon was reserved for the special ornament of the triumph, for ignominy, and for death.[1]

Conclusion of the war.

This, says the historian, was the sixth time that the Jewish capital had been captured, the second time that it had been destroyed. When it rose again from its ashes, it was by the hands, not of its own people, but of Roman colonists; and many are the generations which have since witnessed a siege and a sack of Jerusalem.[2] Of the remainder of this war, which this signal blow did not immediately terminate, there needs little be said. The Jews still maintained themselves in some fortresses of Judea, and the defence of Machærus and Massada adds another brilliant gleam to the sunset of their glory. But the final result of these operations was no longer doubtful, and the Roman chief did not feel that his presence was required at them. His cares were directed to organizing the government of his conquests. The residence of Titus at Berytus, and again at Cæsarea, was marked by bloody shows in the circus, where he solemnized the birthdays of his father and brother with the slaughter of multitudes of Jewish captives. From thence he returned to witness the completion of his instructions with regard to Jerusalem, and, leaving the Tenth legion in garrison on the spot, carried with him the Fifth and Fifteenth into Egypt. His acceptance of the title of Imperator from his soldiers was calculated to give umbrage to the jealousy of the reigning emperor,

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vii. 2.

[2] Jerusalem is said to have been *taken* seventeen times in all,—sometimes, as under the Persian Chosru and the Crusaders, with terrible slaughter; but it has been *overthrown* only by Nebuchadnezzar and Titus.

and his indiscretion in wearing the diadem in a religious ceremony at Memphis was interpreted perhaps by the courtiers to his disadvantage: it was remembered, moreover, that his younger brother, with far less personal merits, had betrayed too keen a zest for imperial distinctions. Titus was well aware that his conduct was liable to misconstruction. Hastening accordingly to Rome as soon as affairs permitted him, he presented himself unannounced in the palace, exclaiming, *Here am I, father!* Vespasian, with good sense and feeling, requited him with confidence and honours, associating him in the triumph which followed, and in the cares and gratifications of empire.[1] That triumph, earned with more toil and peril than any one perhaps of the three hundred and twenty which had preceded it, has been rendered memorable to posterity by monuments still existing.[2] Even in the confusion of the storm and the conflagration, some of the choicest ornaments of the Temple may have been seized and saved by the conquerors. Many of them had perhaps been hidden by pious hands before the last crisis of disaster. But after the capture of the city, certain priests emerging from their hiding-places had saved their own lives by delivering the treasures they had secreted. The sacred furniture of the Holy Place was borne before the Imperators to

Titus returns to Rome and triumphs with Vespasian.

[1] Suet. *Tit.* 5, 6. This association in the empire is selected for the subject of a special compliment by Silius (*Punic.* iii. 603.). Dion remarks (lxvi. 7.) that neither Vespasian nor Titus took the cognomen of Judaicus: "ob contemptum gentis," says Reimar.

[2] The Christian historian Orosius, in his satisfaction at the overthrow of the Jews, looks with special favour on this Judean triumph: "Pulchrum et ignotum antea cunctis mortalibus inter trecentos viginti triumphos, qui a conditione Urbis usque ad id tempus acti erant, hoc spectaculum fuit, patrem et filium uno triumphali curru vectos, gloriosissimam ab his, qui patrem et filium offenderant, victoriam reportasse." Domitian, says Suetonius (*Domit.* 2.), accompanied the triumphal car, on a white horse: but "black care" sat doubtless behind him.

the Capitol;—the candlestick with seven branches, the golden table, the trumpets which announced the year of Jubilee, the book of the Law and the vessel of incense.[1] When, some years later, an arch was erected to commemorate the victory of Titus, these illustrious trophies were sculptured upon it, with figures of Jewish captives surmounted by an emblem of the victor's apotheosis.[2] These witnesses to the truth of the history I have related are scanned at this day by Christians passing to and fro between the Colosseum and the forum: and at this day the Jew refuses to walk beneath them, and creeps stealthily by the side, with downcast eyes or countenance averted.[3]

Final annexation of Palestine and consolidation of the empire.

The annexation of Palestine to the empire was now finally confirmed, and the provinces given in charge to an imperial procurator. Vespasian founded no colony to secure his conquest; he settled 800 of his veterans in the town of Emmaus seven miles from Jerusalem, but he assigned them no territorial possessions. The whole soil was confiscated and sold for the benefit of

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vii. 5. 5., compared with the sculptures on the Arch of Titus at Rome.

[2] The Jewish trophies are sculptured in bas-relief on the inside of the arch, beneath the vaulting. Opposite to these is another bas-relief, representing Titus in the quadriga, the reins held by the goddess Roma. In the centre of the arch Titus is borne to heaven by an eagle. It may be conjectured that these ornaments to his glory were designed after the death of Vespasian, and completed after his own. Another monument of the Jewish triumph exists in the medals of Vespasian, bearing the figure of "Judea captive" beneath the palm-tree. Eckhel, vi. 326. For the subsequent history of the Jewish trophies, which can be traced down to the time of Belisarius, see Burton's *Antiquities of Rome*, i. 290., from Tillemont, *Empereurs Romains.*

[3] For this popular statement Burton refers to Madame de Staël's *Corinne*, chap. iv. That imaginative writer does not profess to give her authority, but only remarks: "Il est à souhaiter, pour l'honneur des Juifs, que cette anecdote soit vraie: les longs ressouvenirs conviennent aux longs malheurs."

the fiscus to the highest bidder. A remnant of the native population entered again, perhaps, into possession of their estates, but at the price of a tribute equal in amount to the fee simple, with the forfeiture of their polity, and dissolution of their chief bond of union. The contribution of two drachmas, which every child of Israel throughout the world had hitherto given annually to the Temple, he was now required to transfer to the Capitol.[1] With the reduction of Palestine the consolidation of the empire was completed. From the Mersey to the Dead Sea no nation remained erect, and the resistance of the last free men on her frontiers had been expiated with their blood. The overthrow of Judea, with all the monuments of an ancient but still living civilization, was the greatest crime of the conquering republic. It commenced in wanton aggression, and was effected with a barbarity, of which no other example occurs in the records of civilization. Jerusalem shared the fate of Tarquinii and Corinth; but the Romans, stalking amongst the ruins of Zion, seemed unconscious that they had annihilated a nation more important in the history of the world than Etruria, or even than Greece. Yet not altogether annihilated. The homeless Jews, scattered, as captives or fugitives, more widely than ever, bore throughout the empire and beyond it the seeds of the law delivered from Sinai, the fortitude which neither Egyptian, nor Syrian, nor Roman could bend or break, the hopes which delay had not extinguished, the maxims which patriarchs and prophets had revered. Even on the frontiers of Palestine the ancient voices were again uplifted. To the temple of Jerusalem succeeded the schools of Tiberias; and the influence of the Rabbis

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vii. 6. 6. Dion, lxvi. 7., where see Reimar's note, and references to Suet. *Domit.* 12.; Tertullian, *Apol.* 18.; Appian, *Syriac.* p. 119.; and Origen, *Opp.* i. 28. ed. Ruæ.; showing how long and how constantly this exaction was maintained.

has in all ages been felt, if not always acknowledged, by Christians and Mahometans, by the sages of both the West and East.

Concluding remarks.

Nor is this all. The Temple fell in the early days of August; the exact date we have not perhaps the means of ascertaining. Josephus indeed, embracing the fond imagination of his countrymen, was persuaded that its final destruction occurred precisely on the day, the 10th of the month Ab, on which it had been once before destroyed by the Assyrians, being 1130 years, 7 months, and 15 days from its first foundation by Solomon, 539 years and 45 days from its restoration under Cyrus.[1] But if we may indulge in the observation of such coincidences, none is more remarkable than the fall by fire, within eight months of each other, of the two national temples of the Romans and the Jews. We have remarked throughout this history the close political connexion, and at the same time the social distrust and jealousy, existing between these peoples. We have long anticipated the decisive war which was destined at last to spring from them. But we have discovered, at the root of this mutual repulsion, so unnaturally controlled, a conflict of ideas still more grave and lasting. Palestine was the cradle of the Gospel; the Jews the people first appointed to ex-

[1] Joseph. vi. 4. 8. Our author is generally supposed to use the names of the Macedonian months for the Jewish, which most nearly corresponded with them. Thus Lous represents Ab, which comprises (normally) part of July and August. But as the Hebrew months are lunar, with a thirteenth intercalated periodically, the solar season to which they correspond may vary to the extent of eleven days. The 10th of Lous, therefore, on which the Temple was burnt, may be at the end of July or early in August. Modern chronologists have cut the knot by making Lous to correspond exactly with the Roman August, and so fixing the date in question to August 10. See *Art de Vérifier les Dates:* après J. C. iv. 188. Clinton, more discreetly, abstains from determining it. *Fast. Hell.* iii. 353., *Fast. Rom.* i. 58. The Jews keep their annual fast, in memory of the fall of the Temple, on the 9th of Ab. Salvador, *Domin. Rom. en Judée*, ii. 468.

pound it. The destruction, never to be repaired, of their material Temple cut the cords which bound the New Faith to its local habitation, and launched it, under the hand of Providence, on its career of spiritual conquest; while the boasted restoration of the Capitol was a vain attempt to retain hold of the past, to revive the lost or perishing, to reattach to new conditions of thought an outworn creed of antiquity.

CHAPTER LX.

Character of the Flavian or Antonine era.—Restoration and maintenance of peace by Vespasian.—Reaction from the extravagance of recent times. — Vespasian's habits and policy. — Census and financial measures.—New forum and temple of Peace.—Endowment of the rhetoricians and teachers of literature.—The philosophers expelled from Rome, and execution of Helvidius Priscus. —Demolition of Nero's golden house.—Baths of Titus. — The Colosseum.—Death of Vespasian, A.D. 79, A.U. 832.—Titus assumes the empire.—Relations of Titus with Berenice.—Favour with which he was regarded by the Romans.—His death, A.D. 81, A.U. 834; and character.—Destruction of Herculaneum and Pompeii, and death of the elder Pliny. (A.D. 71–81. A.U. 824–834.)

The Flavian or Antonine period of Roman history.

WE now approach a period of Roman history, distinguished by the general prosperity of the administration, the tranquil obedience of the people, and with a single exception, by the virtue and public spirit of the rulers. The period thus favourably characterized embraces eight reigns, and about a hundred and ten years, from the accession of Vespasian to the death of M. Aurelius. It has been usual, indeed, to confine this famous interval of good government within narrower limits, by making it commence after the death of Domitian; and it has been generally designated by the name of the Antonines, the last two of the emperors it includes. But both the limitation and the designation seem to me inappropriate. The Antonines thus referred to occupy in fact but forty years of this period, while the name they bore was perpetuated, in compliment to their virtues, through several ensuing reigns; and if we are to speak of an Antonine period at all, we ought to extend it to the death of Alexander Severus. On the other hand, the era of peace and legal government, which we have been taught to associate with

the title of Antonine, was really introduced by Vespasian; and the system commenced by him which remained in force, with but one interruption, above a century, might more justly and more intelligibly be styled the Flavian. Though founded on a military revolution, this system was marked by the utmost outward deference for the senate. In the respect they showed to this antique image of aristocratic authority, Vespasian, Trajan, and the Antonines were not surpassed by Augustus himself, while other successors of Augustus had scarce pretended to respect it at all. For more than a century the long struggle between the Imperator and the nobility, between the army and the senate, the sword and the gown, the struggle which had drained the life-blood of Rome from Marius to Nero, slumbered in repose. The claims of the contending powers seemed to be reconciled; the real authority remained, no doubt, with the military chief, but the semblance was imparted to his rivals with a grace and a show of liberality which soothed them into complacent acquiescence. After the death of Aurelius, or, more properly, with the accession of Septimus Severus, the spell was once more broken, the veil was rent asunder, and the senate could never again be deceived into a belief in its sovereign authority. One or two faint attempts to reassert it were speedily and harshly suppressed, and the last sparks of independence were finally extinguished in the administrative revolution of Diocletian and Constantine.

Succession of good princes.

It is not, however, in the pretended government by the senate, a mere shadow of sovereignty, that the peculiar features of the period now before us are traced. Of the eight Cæsars in succession from Vespasian downwards, one only was a debauchee and a tyrant; seven were men of sense and vigour, able rulers, just and beneficent administrators. This unexampled series of good princes in

an absolute monarchy has been regarded as a fortunate accident; but it is not fair to ascribe it to accident only. The men were the product of their times, and were legitimate representatives of the class from which they sprang, the military aristocracy of the empire. With the single exception above cited, they had all been trained from youth in habits of discipline and the discharge of public duties; they had learnt to obey before they were called upon to govern; a training which seldom failed, under the stern traditions of Roman education, to make men of conduct and self-control. At the same time, the habits of their age, chastened by suffering, and sobered from the debauches of the youth of the empire, did not tempt them, as their predecessors had been tempted, to the gross extravagance and cynicism which disgraced the nobles of the Julian and the Claudian court. The age was better, as we shall see, and the men who represented the age were accordingly better also.

The period deficient in records.

A period thus marked by virtue in the highest places, and by moderation and sobriety in the ranks beneath, is naturally deficient in incident. Still more is the Flavian period deficient in historical records. Tranquillity at home and success for the most part abroad, can furnish few events of stirring interest, and few characters attractive or instructive. Accident has deprived us of that large portion of Tacitus's *Histories* in which the career of Vespasian and his sons was doubtless narrated in the fullest detail. The voluminous recital of Dion is reduced, almost at the same moment, to a meagre abridgment; the biographies of Suetonius become, as he approaches his own times, unaccountably slight and superficial. Although the century before us was prolific in historical composition, we possess none but the slightest fragments of contemporary narrative. Our materials for history must be

gathered almost wholly from indirect sources; from letter-writers, panegyrists, satirists, and philosophers; from the scattered intimations of coins and inscriptions; as a last resource, from the vague, unfaithful compilations of later ages. The Flavian or Antonine period has indeed attracted the notice of many modern students, and has been eulogized by some as a period of great and exceptional happiness for mankind.[1] It has been sketched in essays, in which a partial collection of facts, or a skilful disposition of light and shade, has sufficed to give to it precisely those features and characteristics which harmonized with the writer's previous conception. It will be my task to lay before the reader an ample narrative of the events recorded, with such a delineation of the state of affairs as our imperfect information and my own prescribed limits will allow.

Vespasian closes the temple of Janus.

If the triumph over Judea was celebrated, as we may conjecture, soon after Titus's return from the East,—that is, in the middle of the summer of 824,—it would nearly coincide with the anniversary of Vespasian's assumption of the purple two years previously.[2] The Imperator was now in his sixty-second year; old enough to feel fatigued by a long ceremonial in which he took personally no interest. He was prouder, we may believe, of the distinguished son who shared his triumph, than of the acclamations with which he was himself saluted, and complained of his own weak-

[1] I need scarcely refer the reader of Roman History to the early chapters of Gibbon's History, which are animated throughout by this idea, or to the paragraph headed "general felicity," near the end of ch. 2., in which it is more distinctly indicated. A few years later Hegewisch worked it out, with special reference to Gibbon's views, in a formal treatise, on "The Epoch of Roman History which was the happiest for the Human Race;" by which he does not mean the happiest epoch of all history, an extravagance which seems to have been reserved for a very recent essayist.

[2] The accession is dated, it will be remembered, from the salutation by the army at Cæsarea, July 17, U.C. 822, A.D. 69.

ness in accepting in his old age honours to which he had little claim from his origin, and which he so little coveted as the reward of his achievements.[1] The descent of the victor from the Capitol, and the return of his soldiers to their quarters, were followed by the solemn announcement of peace restored to the empire. The new Augustus closed once more the temple of Janus, which had stood open since the German wars of the first princeps; or, according to the computation of the Christian Orosius, from the birth of Christ to the overthrow of the Jewish people: for the senate had refused to sanction Nero's caprice in closing it on his precarious accommodation with Parthia.[2] Never before had this solemn act addressed the feelings of the citizens so directly; for in the recent season of war they had been made to taste more nearly and more painfully of its horrors than at any time since the days of Marius and Sulla. They had undergone a mutiny of their legions, a revolt in their provinces, the bitter hostility of a rival nation not yet broken to subjection; and all these perils had been enhanced by the irruption of barbarian hordes in more than one quarter within their frontiers. But these troubles, however terrible, were counted as nothing in comparison with the strife of Romans against Romans, within the limits of Italy, even within the walls of Rome itself. For a moment, the emperor, the senate and every other authority,

[1] Suet. *Vesp.* 12.: "Meritove plecti qui triumphum, quasi aut debitum majoribus suis aut speratum unquam sibi, tam inepte senex concupisset." In a similar spirit he was wont to jeer at the folly of men who affected the empire: "Stultitiæ arguens, qui ignorarent quanta moles molestiaque imperio inessent." Victor, *de Cæsar.* 9.

[2] Orosius, vii. 3.; from a lost passage of Tacitus: "Sene Augusto Janus patefactus . . . . . usque ad Vespasiani duravit imperium." The frontier wars of Rome could hardly be said at any moment to have entirely ceased; but the transient lull of hostilities on the conclusion of peace with Parthia, A.D. 63, just before the outbreaks on the Rhine and in Palestine, was perhaps as complete as at any time previous or subsequent.

had fallen beneath the heels of a tumultuous soldiery, and the laws had succumbed to the furious violence of the camp. The civilization of eight centuries had lain at the mercy of worse than barbarian frenzy.

Tranquillity of the provinces.

The preservation of the empire from so many perils around it and within it, is one of the most remarkable events of our history. Yet this is not the first time that in the midst of local rebellions and central dissension, the great bulk of the provinces, instead of rising in one mass against their conquerors, had remained passive under a yoke which it might seem easy to shake off for ever. The same phenomenon had occurred during the contests of Cæsar and Pompeius, and again when the whole Roman world was convulsed by the struggle of Octavius and Antonius. If the frantic resistance of the Jews gave birth now to no sympathetic movements among the subject races of the East; if in the West the revolt of the legions excited no general outbreak of the nations from which they had chiefly sprung; if the convention of the states of Gaul had separated with a resolution to stand aloof from the military mutiny, and the prospect of an independent sovereignty had roused no patriotic feeling among the descendants of Vercingetorix; the Romans themselves might ascribe this apathy to a sense of the solid benefits of their rule. Such, indeed, is the explanation to which Tacitus, feeling evidently that an explanation is required, himself inclines: nevertheless we must remember that it will hardly apply to the circumstances of the earlier period, when the character of the Roman sway had not yet made itself fully felt. We must bear in mind, however, the great deficiency in ancient society of the means by which common feeling and opinion are concentrated and diffused through large tracts of country, and among wide-spread populations. Tribes and races were then more sharply separated from each other in thought, speech

and usage; the centres of local action were indefinitely multiplied; communication was tedious or uncertain; the interchange of commerce was irregular and slender; the continent was an archipelago of insulated communities, in which men were separated as much by their social jealousies as by the natural impediments to union and combination. It was only by the control of a powerful aristocracy that these clans could at any time be moved together. From the period of their conquest it had been the policy of the Romans to extinguish the authority of the chiefs throughout the provinces, and to set up in its place a number of local democracies, weak in themselves, full of domestic jealousies and foreign rivalries, suspicious of every appeal to a common sentiment, looking with petty exclusiveness to their own special interests, and neglecting more and more even the imperfect means of intercommunication which they possessed. Perhaps the Romans, accustomed themselves to the contemplation of national feelings and common motives of action, exaggerated the national character of the resistance made to their arms in Gaul, Spain, Britain and Germany. It was not the mere illusion of vanity that induced a Cæsar or a Tacitus to dignify with the name of a vast nation the puny efforts of a mere clan or robber's following. At all events we may be sure that no common bond of feeling or interest existed in any of those great provinces at the end of the first century of the empire.[1]

Respite from foreign aggression.

Outside the bounds of Roman dominion there was still less opportunity for concerted action. The barbarians beyond the Rhine and the Danube, on the shores of the Euxine or the

[1] It may be added that the provinces were generally disarmed. Juvenal's rhetorical exclamation: "spoliatis arma supersunt," is hardly true. The proprietors, moreover, were held in check by their own slaves. The Jews could not have maintained their internecinal war against Rome, had not their social system been very different in this respect from that of Gaul or Africa.

Caspian, always restless and generally aggressive, could only combine under the precarious authority of some leader of unusual qualities or fortune. A Maroboduus or a Mithridates might have made himself formidable to Rome at the crisis of the late civil commotions: but the Germans had been skilfully divided; the Scythians and the Dacians had not yet learnt to combine; a single detachment in Mœsia was sufficient to strengthen the presidiary legions, and assure the safety of the northern frontier. The Parthians, more vigilant, more politic, more united, were awed by their recent recollection of Corbulo; and they too had their own troubles at this moment to contend with. The arms of Vologesus were occupied by an incursion of the Alani, who were pouring eastward from the mouth of the Tanais, and thundering against the Caspian gates. Vologesus had proudly offered Vespasian the assistance of a force of Parthian cavalry: but no sooner was the imperator seated on his throne, than the Parthian found it convenient to ask for assistance in his turn. Vespasian, who had haughtily declined foreign aid himself, was at liberty to reject his rival's petition.[1] He had no taste for enterprise or adventure: he looked forward to no distant schemes of policy; his own means were straitened, and the resources of the empire crippled. He had just inaugurated an era of peace, and the tranquillity of the state was as dear to him as his own. Perhaps his greatest difficulty lay in resisting the solicitations of Domitian, who is said to have aspired to lead an army in person, and to have importuned his father for the means of reaping laurels for himself.[2]

[1] It was remarked that Vespasian allowed Vologesus to address him a letter with the superscription, "Arsaces, king of kings, to Flavius Vespasianus, greeting:" and even used the same terms in his reply, without assuming himself the imperial titles. Dion. lxvi. 11.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 2.; Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vii. 7. 4.; Dion, lxvi. 15. This incident is referred to the year U.C. 828, A.D. 75.

The Peace of Vespasian applauded by the Romans.

The joy of the citizens at their extraordinary deliverance is strongly marked in the scanty records of the time which have descended to us. The Peace of Vespasian was celebrated by a new bevy of poets and historians not less loudly than the Peace of Augustus. A new era of happiness and prosperity was not less passionately predicted. Even the dry prose of the philosopher Pliny bursts into luxuriance at the sight of the divine emperor marching with his sons majestically along *the sacred path of virtue and beneficence, trodden by the chiefs of Roman story.*[1] The medals of the period were stamped with repeated allusions to this consummation of the emperor's fortune, a consummation not attained by unworthy compliances, but dignified by the restoration of domestic freedom and the overthrow of every foreign enemy.[2] This was the public service to which the Flavian dynasty could appeal, and it covered defects in title which would have startled the Romans of an earlier day. The family of the divine Julii, divine in birth, in beauty, and in genius, was replaced by a brood of mere plebeians, adapted neither by their origin, their history, nor their personal characteristics, to engage the

[1] Plin. *Hist. Nat.* ii. 7.: "Hac proceres iere Romani; hac cœlesti passu cum liberis suis vadit maximus omnis ævi rector Vespasianus Augustus, fessis rebus subveniens." Comp. Aurel. Victor, *de Cæsar.* 9.: "Exsanguem diu fessumque terrarum orbem brevi refecit;" and Q. Curtius, x. 9., if we may assign this date to the author of the "Life of Alexander." Those who believe that the *Aratea* of "Germanicus Cæsar" is the work of Domitian, will also compare v. 16.: "Pax tua, tuque adsis nato numenque secundes." But, for myself, I adhere to the opinion I formerly expressed, that the "Germanicus Cæsar" of the Codd. is the nephew of Tiberius. Imhof shows, among other arguments, that Domitian never bears this title among his contemporaries, but rather that of "Germanicus Augustus." Imhof, *Domitianus*, p. 134.

[2] Clinton, *Fast. Rom.* i. 59.; Eckhel, *Doct. Numm. Vett.* vi. 323—330. See the legends: "Roma resurges:" "Pax orbis terrarum:" "Paci æternæ domus Vespasiani:" "Assertor libertatis publicæ:" "Signis receptis," &c.

sympathies of a superstitious and imaginative people. The father, the first of his name who had risen to civil honours, had only been known, while yet a subject, as the plainest of citizens, thrifty and penurious in his habits, mean in his address, homely in countenance and figure, gifted with no spark of enthusiasm or genius, a man who had descended from the highest office to exercise a trade, where he seemed to be just in his proper sphere; and in accordance with this character, after his accession to power he made no secret of his contempt for the flatterers who pretended to discover an heroic origin for his race.[1] Of the sons, the elder, though rarely seen in the city, had been shunned there as a dissolute youth, of foreign manners and inclinations; the younger was only too notorious for his frivolity and debaucheries. But Vespasian and Titus had deserved well of the republic in the field; they had saved their country from its foes: and even Domitian, contemptible as he was, might find some favour with the citizens as the defender of the Capitol against a new Gaulish invasion, as a patriot who had contended for the honour of the national deities, and *waged the wars of Jove.*[2]

But in fact the regard in which the new dynasty was held, rested on deeper feelings than those of mere personal admiration. The temper of the Ro-

[1] Suet. *Vesp.* 12.: "Conantes quosdam originem Flaviæ gentis ad conditores Reatinos comitemque Herculis irrisit ultro."

[2] Statius, *Sylv.* v. 3. 198.:

"Et Senonum furias Latiæ sumpsere cohortes."

And *Thebaid.* i. 21.:

"Aut defensa prius vix pubescentibus annis
Bella Jovis."

The defence of the Capitol was likened to the wars of Jupiter and the Titans. At a much later period we meet with an allusion to paintings on this subject on the walls of the temple:

"Juvat infra tecta Tonantis
Cernere Tarpeia pendentes rupe Gigantas."
Claudian, xxviii. 45.

mans had undergone a great and sudden change. The voluptuous luxury of the early empire had reached its climax under Nero, and the nation was suffering from the effects of its indulgence. It was sick at heart, debilitated and remorseful. The rash attempt to follow their sovereign in the race of extravagance had overwhelmed the fortunes of his wealthiest courtiers; his tyranny had crushed the most powerful nobles; the conflagration of the city had destroyed the palaces and accumulated treasures of many of the chief families; disturbance in the provinces had dried up the sources of opulence, which had been wont to flow with unbroken current to Rome and Italy. The vulgar magnificence of upstart freedmen had outraged the national dignity, and put prodigality out of fashion. When Vespasian, by his firmness in redressing extortion abroad, and his vigilance in checking peculation at home, enforced the moderation recommended by his own conspicuous example, he found his subjects well inclined to hail the new era, and accept with satisfaction the restrictions he might place on display and expenditure. Possibly, indeed, the futility of sumptuary enactments had been discovered; but while the inquisitions of the ædiles had proved always ineffectual, the turn given to social manners by the habits of the court seems to have been both immediate and lasting. For a hundred years, says Tacitus, from the battle of Actium to the reign of Galba, the refinements of the table, the coarsest and most pervading form of luxury among the Romans, had flourished rankly; but though there continued, no doubt, to occur many instances of gross and profuse living, the period of the worst extravagance now passed away, never to return in its pristine licentiousness.[1] One happy effect of the late

[1] Tac. *Ann.* iii. 55.: "Luxus mensæ . . . . paulatim exolevere." Of the existence of the two Apicii, each the model of luxurious living in his own time at Rome, there can be no reasonable doubt. The first

bloody conflicts was the introduction of many new men from provincial families into the magistracy and senate, and these offshoots of a ruder stock retained, even with their enhanced fortunes, much of the simplicity of their ancient manners. We may remark from this time much greater moderation in the tone of Roman literature, and generally more decorum of thought and language, than in the age preceding. The people seem to have become suddenly sobered. Their most cherished illusions had been dispelled by suffering. We meet with little now of the turgid declamation, of which we have heard so much, on the grandeur of Rome, the immensity of her conquests, the eternity of her dominion. Henceforth, instead of flaunting contrasts between the fortune of the empire and the meanness of all foreign nations, we shall find the greater happiness and virtue of the simple barbarians insinuated or even asserted. Arms are no longer exalted as the legitimate career of the citizen. Wealth is not ostentatiously worshipped as the highest object of desire. Luxury, and the vices which attend it, are denounced as sins, not merely mocked as vulgar affectations. Obedience is held not less honourable than command; domestic habits and virtues are regarded with pleasure and esteem. On the other hand,—such is the point at which the highest philosophy has arrived,—the true Divinity consists, according to Pliny, in rendering aid as a mortal to fellow mortals. This is recognised, at least among the most intelligent, as the actual origin of mythological romance; and such as this is the godlike career of the august Vespasian, the greatest of all rulers in every age and realm, who sustains with

lived in the first century before Christ, the second in the first century after. It is to the second that most of our notices refer. The third, who is said to have flourished in the reign of Trajan, i.e. the second century of our era, is only known from one anecdote, which may well be apocryphal, of Athenæus.

his sons' assistance the tottering fabric of society. This is the career of immortal glory, the only immortality, as the writer plainly intimates, to which man can hope to attain, however natural and pious the custom of ascribing a divine eternity to the great benefactors of their species.[1] Even the court poets were awed to measured decency by the quiet sentiment of the nation. The panegyric of Vespasian by Silius Italicus, the ape of Virgil, is modelled upon that of *Augustus Cæsar, the offspring of the Gods*; but it hardly yields in dignity to one of the finest passages of the Æneid, while it repudiates its most vicious audacities.[2]

Personal appearance and habits of Vespasian.

Yet if we turn from the acts and merits of Vespasian to the lineaments of his face and figure, we can hardly refrain from smiling at the enthusiasm avowed for him. None of the Roman emperors had a countenance prosaic as his; nor do the artists who were occupied upon it, seem to have imagined that they could commend themselves to their patron by an attempt to embellish or idealize it. The monuments of Vespasian represent him as short and compact in figure, with a thick

[1] See the remarkable passage in Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* ii. 5., to part of which I have already referred. "Deus est mortali juvare mortalem, et hæc ad æternam gloriam via. Hac proceres iere Romani . . . . Hic est vetustissimus referendi bene merentibus gratiam mos, ut tales numinibus ascribant. Quippe et omnium aliorum nomina deorum . . . . . ex hominum nata sunt meritis."

[2] Silius, iii. 594.:

"Exin se Curibus *virtus cælestis* ad astra
Efferet . . . .
Hinc pater ignotam donabit vincere Thulen,
Inque Caledonios primus trahet agmina lucos;
Compescet ripis Rhenum, reget impiger Afros,
Palmiferamque senex bello domitabit Idumen;
Nec Stygis ille lacus viduataque lumine regna,
Sed Superum sedes, nostrosque tenebit honores."

I need not repeat, for the classical reader, the corresponding encomium on Augustus, *Æneid.* vi. 793.: "Augustus Cæsar *Divum genus*," &c.

neck and broad sensual chin, a round bald head, small restless eyes, coarse nose and lips, a forehead deeply wrinkled with fatigue rather than with thought, and his whole expression that of uneasiness and effort.[1] It may be worth remarking, as a trait of manners, that the biographer, in noticing the robustness of his health, says that he took no further care of it than to rub his limbs regularly after bathing, and interpose one day's fast in the course of every month. His ordinary habit, after attaining the sovereignty, was to be awaked before the customary hour, that is, before dawn, read his letters and despatches, and then admit his friends to his levée. He slipped his feet into sandals without assistance, huddled on his toga, and after transacting business, drove out and returned for his siesta.[2] His repose was soothed by female caresses; but after the death of his legitimate consort he was content to renew the less regular union he had previously formed with a freedwoman named Cœnis, and on losing her also, soon after his accession to power, made thenceforth no other permanent connexion.[3] From the midday retirement he proceeded to the bath, and thence to supper, at which he demeaned himself with the affability of a man conscious of having discharged to his satisfaction all the duties of the day. His conversation was sprightly, and he allowed his companions

[1] Suetonius describes him with a few graphic touches: "Statura fuit quadrata, compactis firmisque membris, vultu veluti nitentis." *Vesp.* 20.

[2] Suet. *Vesp.* 21, 22.

[3] Cœnis was a freedwoman of the Claudian family, and had been a favourite of Antonia, the mother of Claudius. With her Vespasian formed the connexion tolerated by Roman law under the name of *contubernium*. At a later period he made a regular marriage with a Roman matron, by whom he had the two sons who succeeded him. On her decease he recalled Cœnis on the former terms, the law not admitting of union by *confarreatio* or by *æs et libra*, in such a case. Suet. *Vesp.*: "Revocavit in contubernium." Cœnis died in 824, Dion, lxvi. 14.

almost as much licence in raillery as he assumed for himself; but his humour was reputed somewhat low by the polished wits of the court of Nero and Otho. Some of his coarse and caustic jests are recorded, which might serve to illustrate the manners of the times, were they fit for modern ears. One perhaps may be repeated, which is characteristic of the man, and has attained celebrity. When seized with his last illness and feeling the near approach of dissolution, *Ah!* he whispered to his attendants, *methinks I am becoming a God.*[1]

A census, and other restorative measures.

But if such were the new emperor's relaxations, he was thoroughly in earnest in matters of business. He took a plain soldier's view of his duty, without looking forward as a statesman; but in the daily work before him he shrank from no responsibility. A Roman who understood the office of censor was always in earnest. It involved him in many feuds and some dangers. Tiberius had been too cynical; Caius too reckless; Nero too self-indulgent to accept an invidious responsibility for the sake of the public weal. Augustus had assumed it from policy; Claudius in pedantry fortified by insensibility; but to Vespasian it bore the form of an act of military discipline. The dis-

[1] Suet. *Vesp.* 23.: "Væ! puto deus fio." The popular opinion of Vespasian's amiable qualities is preserved in the romance on the life of Apollonius by Philostratus, but the anecdotes there recorded of him can hardly be accepted as history. It is pretended that Vespasian, conversing with the philosopher in Egypt, for whom he felt the highest reverence, and whose guidance he solicited, entreated him to make him emperor: *ποίησόν με, ἔφη, βασιλέα* (v. 27.). "I have already done so," replied the sage, "in praying the Gods to give us for emperor a just, generous, temperate, old-fashioned, father of a family." "O Jupiter," returned Vespasian, "may I govern wise men, and may wise men govern me!" Then turning to the Egyptians, he said, "Draw from me as from the Nile" (*ἀρύσασθε ὡς Νείλου κἀμοῦ*). If he really said anything like this, it must have been in a moment of very unusual enthusiasm. It is possible, indeed, that even Vespasian's insensibility was not proof against the intoxication of flattery attending upon a great success.

orders of the times had thinned the ranks of the privileged orders. The senate, it is said, had been reduced to two hundred members.[1] Both senators and knights had been impoverished, degraded by ignominious compliances, blasted by popular odium. Illegitimate pretenders had stepped into the places left vacant by death and ruin. Vespasian set about the revision of the lists, after ancient precedent, and associated his son Titus with himself in the task. The elder seems indeed to have conducted himself with more temper than the younger colleague; for it was against the son rather than the father that the murmurs of the victims were directed. Vespasian's deference to the senate continued after his decease to be noted as the great merit of his administration; and it was mentioned to his honour that for many years he refused to accept the tribunitian power, and the title of Father of his country.[2] Nor would he have escaped so free from the most odious charges of immorality, lavished at all times on the personal enemies of the order, had he rendered himself obnoxious by the austerity of his censures. But Titus, on the other hand, is branded with the most flagrant imputations, such as, having circulated at first privately in angry and indignant circles, were too often admitted without proof, but without hesitation, among the records of history. The inquisition now made into the character, as well as the birth and means of

[1] Such is supposed to be the meaning of Aurel. Victor, *de Cæsar.* 9., "Lectis undique optimis viris mille gentes compositæ, cum ducentas ægerrime reperisset." He has just been speaking of the senate. But, as there were several individual families, and of course many persons of one family in the same gens or house, at the same time members of the senate, the phrase would not be a correct one. Still I can hardly suppose that the author means us to understand that the whole number of Roman houses, patrician and plebeian, was reduced to 200, or that Vespasian created new houses to such an extent.

[2] Suet. *Vesp.* 12. Even during the civil war he relinquished the imperial etiquette of causing all who approached him to be searched for concealed weapons.

the Roman nobles, furnished no doubt an opportunity for proscribing many persons against whom the Flavian dynasty might harbour ill-will.[1] Titus, we are told, charged with the defence of the new settlement of power, did not scruple, in one instance at least, to procure the assassination of an enemy to his family. He invited a hostile senator, the Vitellian general Cæcina, to supper, and caused him to be waylaid on leaving his presence, and murdered. The proofs of the victim's complicity in a plot were said indeed to be notorious; nevertheless a rumour prevailed, and was accepted by many as true, that his real offence was his supposed intimacy with Titus's favourite Berenice.[2]

The financial crisis, and fiscal policy of Vespasian.

To prop the tottering and almost prostrate commonwealth, then to secure and adorn it, such according to the biographer of the Cæsars was the chief care of Vespasian's principate. Strict discipline must be restored to the camp; the insolence of the victors must be repressed; the angry restlessness of the vanquished must be soothed. Of the Vitellian soldiers the greater number received their discharge, sweetened, no doubt, by adequate compensations; while to those who had shared his victory the conqueror extended no special indulgence, but doled out their legitimate remuneration slowly and grudgingly. The restriction of the first military honours, long unworthily lavished, to the greatest military services, caused perhaps murmurs which have left their echoes in the record of

[1] Vespasian assumed the censorship U. C. 825, A. D. 72: "Intra quadriennium," says Pliny, writing his Seventh Book (*Nat. Hist.* vii. 50.)

[2] Suet. *Vesp.* 8., *Tit.* 6.; Victor. *Epit.* 10. The Cæcina of Suetonius is the Allienus of Dion, lxvi. 16., whose criminal intentions are admitted by that writer. Titus is accused of having effected the destruction of other suspected persons by sending his creatures into public places with instructions to call loudly for their punishment, which he pretended to interpret as the voice and declared will of the people.

our history.[1] The frugal temper and actual poverty of the emperor were half disguised by an affected simplicity of manners; as when he rebuked a perfumed candidate with a gesture of disgust, and the sharp remark, *I had rather you had smelt of garlic.* The censorship offered an opportunity for a reconstitution of the provinces and free states, many of which were dealt with according to their political deserts, or sacrificed to the convenience of the treasury. The gift of Latin rights to the whole of Spain was a tribute to the memory of Galba, and to the support his enterprise had received in the adhesion of the Iberians.[2] This favour to the Western provinces was balanced by severity towards other portions of the empire. Achaia, to which Nero had precipitately granted freedom, was again reduced, on pretence of an insurrection, to the condition of a taxable province; and Lycia, Rhodes, Byzantium and Samos, were deprived also of their autonomy.[3] The dependent sovereignties which had subsisted up to this time in Thrace, Cilicia, and Commagene, were finally absorbed into the state, and enrolled among the contributors to the fiscus.[4] Whatever pretexts might be assigned for these harsh measures, they were no doubt really directed by financial expediency. The diffi-

[1] Vespasian restored their due significance to the triumphal ornaments, such as the tunica palmata, which Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero had prostituted to men of inferior claims and even to civilians. See Marquardt (Becker's *Handbuch der Alterth.* iii. 2. 453.).

[2] Plin. *Hist. Nat.* iii. 4.

[3] Suet. *Vesp.* 8. 14.; Pausanias, vii. 17., after mentioning Nero's liberality to Greece: *οὐ μὴν Ἕλλησί τε ἐξεγένετο ὄνασθαι τοῦ δώρου. Οὐεσπασιανοῦ γὰρ μέτα Νέρωνα ἄρξαντος, ἐς ἐμφύλιον στάσιν προήχθησαν, καὶ σφᾶς ὑποτελεῖς τε αὖθις ὁ Οὐεσπασιανὸς εἶναι φόρων, καὶ ἀκούειν ἐκέλευσεν ἡγεμόνος. ἀπομεμαθηκέναι φήσας τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τὸ Ἑλληνικόν.* Comp. Philostr. *Vit. Apollon.* v. 41., where the philosopher is said to have expressed his indignation to the emperor's face.

[4] Suet. *l.c.* Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* vii. 7. 1., refers the annexation of Commagene to the year A.D. 72, U.C. 825, when the King Antiochus was brought with his son to Rome. Flaviopolis, in Cilicia, commenced its era with the year 74.

culties of the imperial government were in fact tremendous, and the charges of parsimony or avarice which have been made against this emperor, must be considered in reference to his necessities. The Flavian dynasty succeeded to the inheritance of an exhausted population, a rapacious soldiery, and an empty and embarrassed treasury. The Capitol was not yet completed, and probably large debts remained to discharge on the cost of its reconstruction. The losses of the civil wars had been severe and various. Italy had been devastated, the more distant provinces had been drained. Whole cities awaited the restoring hand of the emperor. Meanwhile the revenues of the wealthiest regions had been embezzled by the prefects, or diverted into the camps. Vespasian not only suspended the dissipation of the finances in the mad luxury of the imperial court, and in the construction and embellishment of the imperial palace. He ordered the demolition of the greater part at least of Nero's golden house. Nevertheless there were other heavy expenses which he could not refuse to assume.[1] The Capitol was to be rebuilt with a magnificence suited to the age; the temple of Peace, the pledge of his policy, was to be erected; it was essential perhaps to the stability of the new dynasty to acknowledge the principle of deifying deceased emperors, and the shrine of Claudius, vowed to him by Agrippina, but swept away by his successor, was to be restored: at the same time the amusement of the citizens must not be neglected; and the erec-

[1] Among the incidental cares of a prince who arrived at power after the disorders of civil war, may be mentioned that of replacing the archives of the empire which had been lost in the sack of the Capitol. The most important documents of Roman history, senatorial decrees, resolutions of the people, treaties of peace and alliance, engraven on brazen tablets, had been stored up in that sacred receptacle, and were consumed in its conflagration. Vespasian caused them all to be re-engraved from the best sources within reach, and the collection he made amounted to 3000 pieces. Suet. *Vesp.* 8.

tion of a great amphitheatre for the national spectacles, was a prudent indulgence to the passions of the populace. It was no doubt with reference to the manifold expenses by which he found himself beset, the arrears of the past, and the anticipations of the future, of which but a portion has here been indicated, that Vespasian is said to have declared, that to maintain the state of public affairs four-myriad-millions were required.[1]

Vespasian's parsimony unjustly stigmatised.

The inquisition of the censorship, extending to every part of the empire, was directed to settling the finances on a solid basis, and the arrangements above noticed were intended to balance the public revenues and expenditure. Besides bringing several new territories within the sphere of direct taxation, Vespasian revived various imposts which Galba in the first fervour of his triumph had abolished, and also added new ones. He enhanced the tributes of all the provinces, and, in some cases, even doubled them.[2] The Roman writers on land have left us some curious notices, showing how minute and searching was the assessment now made; and they add, that the measures for raising revenue on the strips of public domain still unassigned in Italy, but illegitimately occupied,

[1] Suet. *Vesp.* 16.: "Summa ærarii fiscique inopia, de quâ testificatus sit initio statim principatus, professus quadringenties millies opus esse ut respublica stare posset." This sum of 40,000 millions of sesterces, or 320 millions sterling, has been supposed by some writers to represent the annual revenue or expenditure of the state. Others, startled at the extravagance of this explanation, have proposed to alter *quadringenties* into quadragies; i.e. 400 millions, or 32 millions sterling. So violent a remedy is inadmissible; nor need we suppose that the sum represents the annual revenue of the state, which never probably came under one head at all. See the remarks made in chapter xxxii. of this work. Some of the wide conjectures which have been advanced, as to the amount of the imperial revenues, are collected in a note by Marquardt (Becker's *Handbuch*, iii. 2. 213.). Dureau de la Malle's solution corresponds with that I have proposed in the text. See *Econ. Pol. des Romains*, ii. 405. 435.

[2] Suet. *Vesp.* 16.

caused commotions which could only be appeased by desisting from the attempt.[1] Many trivial particulars of the Flavian finance are added by the historians, who could often see in the reasonable policy of the most honest of the Cæsars nothing but the petty parsimony of a sordid mind. Vespasian is accused of making small gains by speculations; of selling offices to candidates and pardons to criminals; of advancing the most rapacious prefects to the most opulent prefectures, that they might have more to disgorge when it suited him to condemn them for extortion; finally, of inventing new and even disgusting objects of taxation, and defending himself, according to the well-known anecdote, by remarking that the coin smelt not less sweet from them.[2] Nevertheless, Suetonius himself bears witness to many instances of this prince's liberality towards *all classes of men*; to impoverished senators and consulars, to afflicted communities, and generally to the professors of the arts and sciences. It was remarked, as an instance of his consideration for deserving industry, that he rejected a proposal to move the materials for his buildings by improved machinery, declaring that *he must be suffered to feed his people.*[3]

Foundation of colonies.

The foundation of colonies had been, heretofore, the ordinary mode of paying off the discharged veterans of the civil wars, and though Vespasian does not seem to have made any new establishments of this kind, the number of older colonies he reconstituted shows that he followed the policy of his predecessors in relieving, by these means, his over-burdened finances. Ostia, at the mouth of the Tiber, Nola and Puteoli in the wealthiest region

[1] Frontinus, *de Colon.* ed. Gœs. p. 146.; Aggenus, *de Controv. Agrorum*; Hyginus, *de Gener. Controv.* in *Script. Rei Agrar.* ed. Lachmann, pp. 81. 133. See Dureau de la Malle, ii. 436.; Laboulaye, *Droit Foncière*, 71; Marquardt (Becker's *Alterth.* iii. 1. 339.).

[2] Suet. *l. c.*; Dion, lxvi. 14.

[3] Suet. *Vespas.* 18.: "Præfatus, sineret se plebeculam pascere."

of Campania, Forum Populi, Reate, and other places in the districts round the capital, were thus recruited with a new stock; nor need we suppose that, as in the assignments of Octavius, the actual inhabitants were dispossessed for it. This is, perhaps, the first historical fact that confirms what the poets had already indicated, the decrease of population even in the heart of Italy.[1] But the censors must have revealed the token of this ominous movement to the emperór, and thrown a gloom over his prudent efforts to restore the finances.[2]

New forum and temple of Peace.

The colonist sheathed his sword when he put his hand to the plough, and the establishment of colonies was understood as a pledge of the restoration of peace. Among the architectural works with which Vespasian now decorated the city, one of the most prominent was the forum with which he extended the line of cloistered areas thrown open by Julius and Augustus. The great fire had cleared a site for these new constructions at the back of the Roman forum. As the works of his great predecessors had been illustrated by the shrines of Venus and Mars, so the colonnades of Vespasian were arranged to embrace the new temple of Peace, a bold personification of the aspirations of the age,

[1] Nero, indeed, had in the same manner restored Antium and Tarentum. Tac. *Ann.* xiv. 27.

[2] Several places in the provinces may be added to the list of Vespasian's colonies: Aventicum in Gaul, Flaviobriga in Spain, Develtus, Siscia and Flaviopolis in Thrace, Cæsarea in Samaria, and another Flaviopolis, already mentioned, in Cilicia. Comp. Plin. *Hist. Nat.* iv. 18. 31. 34., and inscriptions. Tyre, Paphos, Salamis, and other places in the East, seem to have received favours from Vespasian or Titus, which they acknowledged by commemorating the auspicious year, *ἔτος νεὸν ἱερόν*, on their coins. Of Tyre, Q. Curtius, whose work has been generally assigned to this period, says (iv. 4.): "Multis ergo casibus defuncta, et post excidium renata, nunc tamen longa pace cuncta refovente, sub tutela Romanæ mansuetudinis acquiescit." But from the same passage Niebuhr argues that the writer lived in the time of Severus. Comp. Herodian, iii. 9. 10.; Ulpian, in the *Digest.* l. 15. 1.

unknown to the Grecian Olympus. This temple, which seems to have been of unusual size and splendour, was embellished with the spoils of the Jewish war, and works of art from other countries of the East.[1] The design was completed with a basilica, in which the learned of all professions were invited to meet, and conduct their tranquil discussions.[2] Augustus had endowed the literature of his time with the collection of the Palatine library. Vespasian not only founded a library in his forum, but was the first of the Roman sovereigns to institute a salaried hierarchy of teachers. Augustus in a simpler and more generous age had stimulated genius by personal condescension: but the Flavian era could not appreciate the delicacy of the Augustan, and Vespasian could find no happier means of patronizing letters than by handsome wages paid quarterly. Destitute himself of learning and polite accomplishments, he cannot have been instigated to this indulgence by any just appreciation of the claims of literary merit.[3] Nevertheless, the measure he adopted was systematic, munificent and permanent. Not only did he confer presents or pensions upon poets and artists, but to the rhetoricians and grammarians, both Greek and Latin, in the pro-

Vespasian's liberal endowment of literature.

[1] Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* vii. 5. 7; Plin. *Hist. Nat.* xxxv. 36., xxxvi. 24.; Herodian, i. 44. A picture of the battle of Issus, by an artist of Alexandria, was removed by Vespasian and suspended in the temple of Peace. Ptolemæus apud Phot. (Sharpe's *Hist. of Egypt*, i. 307.) Here also were placed several works of art which Nero had seized in the provinces for the decoration of his Golden House. Plin. *H. N.* xxxiv. 19. 24.

[2] Gellius, v. 21., xvi. 8.; Galen, *de Comp. Medic.* i. See Reimar's note on Dion, lxvi. 15. Upon the locality of this temple the topographers are now agreed. For a long time the great ruins which bear the name of Constantine were mistaken for it.

[3] Aurelius Victor notices as an important fact, that hitherto all the emperors from Augustus, and particularly the five who were of Cæsarean blood, were men of literary accomplishments: *Epit.* 8. "Adeo literis culti atque eloquentia fuere ut, ni cunctis vitiis, absque Augusto, nimii forent, profecto texissent modica flagitia."

vinces as well as in the city, he assigned an annual payment, varying in regular gradations, but amounting ordinarily to a liberal stipend, in addition to their pupils' fees.[1] For such extensive liberality, so new to the policy of Rome, there must have been a strong public motive. Amidst all the brilliancy of the late reigns, the solid education of the upper ranks, in the alarm or reckless profusion of the times, had been grievously neglected, and the encouragement given by Nero to trivial accomplishments had weakened the foundations of the Roman character. The new system may be interpreted as an attempt to restore the tone of society, to infuse into the national mind healthier sentiments and aspirations, in harmony with its sobered view of material enjoyments. At the same time the emperor was not blind to the importance of attaching the Roman youth to his government, and gaining the direction of their thoughts. Hence, perhaps, the jealousy and aversion with which the new mode of public instruction was regarded by such a writer as Tacitus, the depositary of pre-imperial traditions. It was not the publicity of education itself, but the influence assumed over it by the government, that really excited the odium of the old aristocracy. They felt, too, that the professors, the men of phrases and arguments, would soon work their way into the place of governors and magistrates, and supplant the proud but indolent magnates in their immemorial privileges. The rhetorician might be

[1] Suet. *Vesp.* 18.: "Ingenia et artes vel maxime fovit: primus e fisco Latinis Græcisque rhetoribus annua centena (800*l.*) constituit." See farther Schmidt, *Denk- und Glaubensfreiheit im 1sten Jahrhundert*," p. 440 foll. The rhetoricians included the sophists or philosophers. Vespasian extended his liberality occasionally to poets and artists: "Præstantissimos poetas, necnon et artifices, Coæ Veneris, item Colossi refectorem, insigni congiario donavit." He made a present of 500,000 sesterces (4000*l.*) to Saleius Bassus, the "tenuis Saleius" of Juvenal. Tacitus, *Dial. de Orat.* 9., who calls this liberality, "mira et eximia."

raised to the consul's seat, or the consul might descend to the rhetorician's: either alternative was equally distasteful to the adherents of antique prejudice and custom. Quintilian, the teacher of youth and private tutor in the palace, was perhaps the first pedagogue that obtained the consular ornaments; but his class retained to the last the advantages they now acquired, and continued to scale the heights of office from the modest but convenient elevation of the professor's chair. Moreover the grammarians were for the most part philosophers, and the teachers of wisdom and morality, the avowed critics of political authority, were soothed by the same measures which converted the professors of literature into instruments of government. A lasting alliance was effected between the preachers of ethics and the guardians of the public peace, the absence of which had caused many collisions in the reigns of earlier emperors. At Rome, at Athens, at Antioch, and other centres of intellectual activity, ideas were generally enlisted on the side of government. The experiment of the Greek sovereigns of Egypt was applied with like results throughout the empire. At Alexandria Vespasian had observed and meditated on the policy of the Ptolemies: he appreciated the caresses and flatteries he there received from grammarians and sophists; and possibly the consciousness of his own deficiency in the learning of the schools enhanced his notion of its political importance.

Measures of Vespasian against the philosophers.

The alliance, I have said, was durable, but its effect was not immediately complete. Philosophy, during the last century, had been a school of political opposition; and though the common voice of the unlettered populace hailed the Flavian empire as a blessing, the men of ideas and theories refused, at least for one generation, to descend from the heights of their impracticable dogmatism, and acknowledge the sovereignty of a mild

autocrat as the sole refuge from anarchy and barbarism. The temple of Peace was consecrated in the year 828; but the alliance it was intended to cement between the prince and the philosophers was quickly broken by intrigues against the chief of the state, which could be too surely traced to men of character and influence. Curiatius Maternus, a distinguished orator, the favourite of the old aristocracy, excited the jealousy of Vespasian's government, mild and liberal though it professed itself, by the freedom of his tragedies on Roman subjects, in which he painted the fall of liberty. In a later reign this eccentricity seems to have proved fatal to him.[1] Helvidius Priscus, a man of higher fame, whose intemperate opposition has already been noticed, continued to murmur at the conduct of affairs; but in the absence of details we can only acquiesce in Dion's judgment on his principles. He indulged in vain and aimless allusions to liberty and the free state, shades of the past to which no public man pretended to give a substance, fancying that on him had descended the mantle of his father-in-law, the reserved and prudent Thrasea, who, on the contrary, while he withdrew from political life under the tyranny of Nero, professed no violent opposition, nor would ever have balanced a visionary republic against the wise and legitimate principate of Vespasian.[2] It is the penalty of power that inferior

[1] Maternus is one of the principal characters in the dialogue *de Oratoribus*, ascribed to Tacitus. See capp. 2. 3. 11. 13. Besides a *Medea* and a *Thyestes*, he wrote a *Domitius* and a *Cato*. Some critics hold him to be the author of the *Octavia* which goes under the name of Seneca. He is supposed to be the Maternus put to death by Domitian: Dion, lxvii. 12.

[2] Such at least was the conduct of Thrasea as depicted by Tacitus. Dion obscures at first the real difference between the two: Ἐλουίδιος . . . τὴν τοῦ Θρασέου παῤῥησίαν οὐ σὺν καιρῷ μιμούμενος: though in the fragment which seems to be rightly appended to this chapter, he plainly contradicts himself, adding: ἦν γὰρ τοῦ Θρασέου γαμβρὸς καὶ ζηλοῦν αὐτὸν ἐπλάττετο· πολὺ δ' αὐτοῦ ἥμαρτανε. Θρασέας μὲν γὰρ ἐπὶ Νερωνος ὢν οὐκ ἠρέσκετο αὐτῷ, καὶ οὐδὲν μέντοι οὐδ' ὣς ὑβριστικὸν ἔλεγεν

minds cannot discriminate between tyranny and just authority, and are more likely to revolt against an indulgent prince than an unscrupulous despot. Helvidius indeed was exasperated against the emperor by a private grudge, and the penalty he at last paid was due to his perverse malignity. Vespasian long bore with this unprincipled opposition, which distressed and mortified him. He knew himself to be the object of many conspiracies, encouraged if not actually fostered by the murmurs of such orators as Helvidius. He was engaged on a great experiment in maintaining just and equitable government. The threat he once pronounced after listening to a petulant harangue, *Either my son shall succeed me, or I will have no successor*, implying that if his dynasty was rejected the state would be left without a chief at all, was received with a shudder by thousands who felt that the empire was a state necessity.[1] It was to protect the state no less than himself that he procured a decree for Helvidius's exile, and followed it with an order for his death. This last command it seems he either did not mean to be executed, or at least speedily repented of, and would have withdrawn; but officious courtiers interposed to assure him that it was too late, and the victim had already suffered.[2] Helvidius was the only martyr the philosophers could claim. In no other

Exile and death of Helvidius.

ἐς αὐτὸν, οὐδὲ ἔπραττεν . . . . . οὗτος δέ Οὐεσπασιανῷ ἤχθετο, καὶ οὔτ' ἰδίᾳ οὔτε ἐν τῷ κοινῷ αὐτοῦ ἀπείχετο. Dion, lxvi. 15. Comp. Suet. *Vesp.* 15.

[1] Dion, *l. c.*: ἐμὲ μὲν υἱὸς διαδέξεται ἢ οὐδεὶς ἄλλος. It is possible, however, that the expression should be differently interpreted. Comp. Victor, *Cæs.* 9.: "Simul divinis deditus, quorum vera plerisque negotiis compererat, successores *fidebat* liberos Titum ac Domitianum fore."

[2] The precise act which gave occasion to this order is not mentioned, nor in what judicial form it was given. Dion: καὶ πολλὰ πράττων ἔμελλέ ποτε δίκην αὐτῶν δώσειν. Suet.: "Relegatum primo, deinde et interfici jussum." Comp. Plin. *Ep.* iii. 11. Tac. *Agric.* 45.: "Nostræ duxere Helvidium in carcerem manus."

case did the punishment of their agitation go farther than banishment. It was however with the full concurrence of public feeling that the emperor resolved to sweep from the city the whole sect of the Stoics and Cynics. Under the tyranny of Nero these men had been silent, even if they had not joined in the general chorus of adulation; but the indulgence of a milder system warmed them till they hissed and stung.[1] Vespasian took counsel with his old adviser Mucianus, who held the offenders in equal contempt with himself. It was determined to revive, for the immediate safety of the state, the obsolete enactments of the republic, which had prosecuted the philosophers for the remotest tendencies ascribed to their teaching. All professors of the obnoxious dogmas were required to leave the city; two of the most noted, Hostilius and the Cynic Demetrius, were deported to islands. Secure of their lives, both these men persisted to the last in virulent invectives against the government. But Vespasian's temper was proof against this provocation. *I will not kill*, he said, *a dog that barks at me.*[2] A special grace was accorded to Musonius Rufus, who seems to have been honest and temperate. He was excepted by name from the common proscription. Whatever might be his political theories, he knew that the free state was impossible, and refrained from flattering the illusions of a frivolous fanaticism.[3]

Banishment of the Stoics and Cynics.

[1] The character of this opposition is shown in the anecdotes mentioned by Epictetus. *Dissert.* i. 1. 2. The Scholiast on Juvenal, iv. 53., gives an account of a certain Palfurius, which shows how philosophy, especially that of the Porch, was the refuge of the discontented personages whom the emperors had degraded for their vices. The repeated sneers of Juvenal at the Stoics and Cynics betray the popular feeling regarding them at the beginning of the second century.

[2] Dion, lxvi. 13.; Suet. *Vesp.* 15.

[3] When even Thrasea had peevishly exclaimed, "I had rather be killed to-day than banished to-morrow," Musonius reproved him in the best spirit of the Stoics: "Should you not rather try to acquiesce in whatever lot befalls you?" Epictetus, *Dissert.* i. 1.

Demolition of Nero's golden house.

Nero's golden house had risen like an exhalation, and like an exhalation it disappeared. The masses of building that projected forward from the Palatine, and connected the mansions of the earlier Cæsars with the Esquiline and the Cælian, were entirely swept away.[1] The colossus alone, which had stood in the entrance of the palace from the Velia, was allowed to remain erect; it is not quite certain, however, whether it was removed from its place at this period. The head indeed of Nero was stricken off, and that of Titus substituted for it. The contrast might have provoked a smile, had the homely features of the elder Flavius rèplaced the divine beauty of the Roman Apollo. On the ridge of the Velia, at the summit of the Sacred Way, were laid the foundations of a triumphal arch, which was completed in the next reign, to commemorate the conquest of Judæa. The palatial buildings, commenced by Nero, on the Esquiline, after being occupied for a time by Titus, were demolished, or converted by a rapid but complete transformation, into public baths. Our antiquaries can even now trace in the manner of their construction the precipitation with which the change was effected; the chambers of the thermæ being erected on the basement of the previous edifice, which still presents a remnant of Nero's original work.[2] The character of the great thermæ of the empire has already been described under the principate of Augustus; but the bath-life of the Romans had not then received its full development. Agrippa had accommodated the citizens by the erection of a multitude of

Erection of baths by Titus.

[1] Orosius, indeed, mentions the burning of the golden house among the disasters of Trajan's reign. I can hardly doubt that he is in error. The imperial residence was henceforth limited to the Palatine.

[2] Suet. *Tit.* 7.: "Thermis celeriter exstructis." Martial, *de Spectac.* 2., indicates that the baths were erected on the site of Nero's palace or gardens:

"Hic ubi miramur velocia munera thermas,
Abstulerat miseris tecta superbus ager."

baths in their streets; but these were diminutive in size and limited in their appliances. The same great benefactor had, however, constructed public baths in the Campus on a grander scale, adorned with halls and porticos, and the Pantheon itself may have been meant for a vestibule to a mass of buildings of proportionate grandeur. In the absence of any corroborative statement, we shall hardly assign such magnificence to the baths of Agrippa. They seem, however, to have been amplified and improved by Nero, by whose name they were afterwards known, and whether they escaped the great fires of their region, or were restored after conflagration, they lasted through the empire, and survived, indeed, the still grander creations of later builders.[1] There can be little doubt, however, that they were far outshone in size, in convenience, and in decoration by the baths of Titus, which were again surpassed by those of Caracalla, Diocletian and Constantine. The erection of these palaces of the people marks an era in our history. It indicates the necessity which the government began to feel of strengthening its intrinsic weakness by pampering an indolent but restless multitude. The monuments of the Flavian and Antonine age show how much the emperors now leant upon their favour with the mass of the citizens, and how great were the sacrifices they made to content and amuse them. The Thermæ of Titus comprised every convenience and every luxury for the residence by day of the great potentate, the mob of Rome. The provision of hot and cold water, of tanks and fountains, for washing, for

The baths of Titus.

[1] The Thermæ Neronianæ are mentioned as in use by Sidonius Apollinaris (*Carm.* xxiii. 495.). The Aqua Virgo, which fed them, brought into the city over the Pincian hill by Agrippa, continues still to convey water to Rome. The other aqueducts which supplied the baths of the later emperors, had been cut off, or had fallen into disrepair, in the course of the fifth century.

bathing, and for steaming, was a part only of the luxurious appliances with which they were furnished. Partly under cover, and partly open to the air, they offered chambers or terraces for every enjoyment and every recreation. Presented to the populace without charge, for even the payment of the smallest copper coin which had been required under the republic was remitted under the empire, no tax whatever was put on the full enjoyment of their attractions. The private lodging of Caius or Titius might be a single gloomy chamber, propped against a temple or a noble mansion, in which he slept in contented celibacy; but while the sun was in the heavens he lounged in the halls of his Castle of Indolence; or if he wandered from them to the circus, the theatre, or the campus, he returned again from every place of occasional entertainment to *take his ease* in his baths.[1]

Erection of the Colosseum.

After all, this club-life was monotonous and might become dull. Excitement was required to vary it, and the emperors found the means of excitement already furnished by the institutions of an earlier age. It only remained for men, in their care for their clients' interests, to enhance these means and extend them. In vain had Cicero and Seneca expressed the sentiments of men of feeling in

[1] To the passages of Seneca and Petronius, indicated in an earlier reference to the subject of the Roman baths (chap. xli.), the reader may add the 86th Epistle of Seneca, in which he contrasts their splendour and luxury in his day, with the squalor of those of the age of Scipio. But the author's style is too declamatory to command our unreserved reliance, and it is not easy to see where the rhetorician is describing the public baths, and where the private dissipation of voluptuous nobles and freedmen. The Christian writers, who denounced in the strongest terms the shows and theatres, do not seem to have preached against the baths, except as regarded the promiscuous bathing of the sexes, which, indeed, was forbidden by Hadrian. Spartian, *Hadr.* 18. See, however, one vigorous blow at them in Augustin: *de Catechiz. rudibus*, beginning: "Quamvis insana gaudia non sint gaudia," &c

rebuking the horrid taste for the shows of the amphitheatre; statesmen and rulers were obliged still to feign an interest in them. Vespasian, though averse from shedding the blood of gladiators, exhibited combats of men with beasts. Titus, while pretending to the character of a philosopher, actually descended into the arena in his native town of Reate, and contended in a sham fight with the veteran Cæcina.[1] But the accession of the Flavian dynasty was signalized by the erection of the most magnificent of the Roman amphitheatres, and this too was built within the limits of the vast Neronian palace, and probably with the spoils of that labyrinth of masonry. We have traced already the origin of the double theatre, the best adapted in form to the shows to which it was especially devoted. The noble edifice of Taurus had been consumed in the recent conflagration, and no other of the kind existed at this time at Rome; for one, which Caius had commenced had been demolished by his successor.[2] Nero was satisfied with the longitudinal area of the circus, in which he could display his skill in charioteering; but the people were discontented, perhaps, at the interruption to their favourite entertainments, for which the circus, obstructed by the spina which ran down its middle, was little adapted. The tradition was still remembered that Augustus had designed the erection of such a building, not in the distant quarter of the Campus, but in the centre of the city, and had he executed his design, he would no doubt have created a work of imposing magnitude and splendour. This

[1] We have been often reminded of the disgust of all true Romans at the citizens, particularly if of birth and rank, who contended with the gladiators in the public shows; but we must remember that there was always one rule for the citizen at Rome, and another abroad, however nigh. Thrasea was not blamed for singing in a tragic drama at Patavium, nor Titus, we may believe, for pretending to fight in the arena at Reate. See Tac. *Ann.* xvi. 21.; Dion, lxvi. 15.

[2] Suet. *Calig.* 21.

project it now remained for Vespasian to realize, and every motive of policy urged him to outshine, in so popular an undertaking, the liberality of his greatest predecessor.[1] The spot he chose for the site was in the hollow between the Esquiline and Cælian, where Nero had excavated a fish tank for his palace, perhaps the lowest level within the city walls; but the elevation to which the building attained overtopped the crests of the surrounding hills, and enabled it, in the words of a very sober poet, *almost* to look down upon the summit of the Capitol.[2] The three tiers of arches, divided by columns of the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian orders, rose one above the other; but the lowest story was thus inferior in height to either of those above it, which seems to detract very much from their architectural effect. A still worse defect perhaps is to be found in the lofty wall or screen of masonry, pierced only by few and narrow windows, which surmounts the light and airy arcades below. This upper tier is moreover the loftiest of the four, and the only motive I can imagine for the stilted height to which it is raised, is the necessity of giving a great elevation to the awning, which seems to have been drawn across the ample area, and which must have sunk considerably from its own weight in the middle.[3]

[1] Suet. *Vesp.* 9.: "Fecit et nova opera, . . . amphitheatrum urbe media, ut destinasse compererat Augustum."

[2] Martial, *de Spect.* 2.:

> "Hic ubi conspicui venerabilis amphitheatri
> Erigitur moles, stagna Neronis erant."

Calpurn. *Ecl.* vii. 23.:

> "Vidimus in cœlum trabibus spectacula textis
> Surgere, Tarpeium *prope* despectantia culmen."

[3] The solidity of the masonry in the topmost story might be necessary for the support of the wooden framework to which the awning was attached. In the lines just quoted from Calpurnius, a writer reputed to be of the age of Domitian, we see an allusion to some sort of wooden scaffolding at the top of the building, and such a scaffolding is said to have been consumed in the fire which occurred in the

The height of this celebrated structure, the cornice of which is still preserved throughout one third of its circuit, is said to be 160 feet: the major axis of its elliptical circumference measures 615, the minor 510 feet, while the length and breadth of the arena itself are respectively 281 and 176 feet. Rows of seats rise concentrically to the level of the upper story, the lowest row, or podium, being assigned to the senators, the vestals, and the emperor with his personal attendants. Eighty-seven thousand spectators were accommodated within the walls. The building was of the rich and warm travertine stone, or encrusted with marble; the most conspicuous parts shone with precious gems and metals; a gilded network protected the sitters in the lowest rows from the chance assaults of the animals beneath them, and the precaution was taken of making the topmost bar to turn on a swivel, so as to revolve at a slight touch, and baffle any attempt to climb by it.[1] We are naturally disappointed at the slight notices preserved of a work so magnificent, which was justly counted among the wonders of the Roman world, and which is invested in our eyes with a special interest as the scene of so many Christian martyrdoms. The eclogue of Calpurnius seems to point to a period when its consecration was still recent, and may belong to the

Dimensions of this building.

reign of Macrinus. I am tempted to conjecture that such was the original construction, when the edifice was first opened by the Flavian emperors, and that it continued so to the date of the fire; the upper story as we now see it, being an addition when the amphitheatre was restored. Coins of Domitian, indeed, represent the building with its present architectural features. But if such was the original design, it is possible that it may not have been completed till the later date.

[1] Calpurn. *Eclog.* vii. 47.:

> "Balteus en! gemmis en! illita porticus auro: . . . .
> Sternitur adjunctis ebur admirabile truncis,
> Et coit in rotulum, tereti qui lubricus axe
> Impositos subita vertigine falleret ungues:" &c.

For a description of the shows of the amphitheatre, see Cassiodor. *Variar.* v. 42. Calpurnius notices only the combats of wild beasts.

age of the last Flavian emperor.[1] The name of Colosseum popularly attached to it, and improperly written Coliseum, first occurs in the works of our countryman Bede in the seventh century. Its origin is not accurately known, and is referred by some to the gigantic size of the building, by others, with more probability, to the colossus of Nero, which was planted before its entrance. The name of Flavian was dropped perhaps on the fall of the dynasty by which it was raised, and the later designation may have come into use as early as the age of the Antonines.[2]

Reflections on the Colosseum.

The Colosseum far exceeds in its dimensions any similar structure of the ancient world; but from the specimens we possess of the Roman amphitheatre, we may conclude that it deviated little in construction from the approved models of the age. The name of the architect to whom so great a work was entrusted has not come down to us. The ancients themselves seem to have regarded this name as a matter of little interest; nor, in fact, do they generally care to specify the authorship of their most illustrious buildings. The reason is obvious. The forms of ancient art, in this department, were almost wholly conventional, and the limits of design within

[1] An attempt has been made by the recent editor Haupt, to place this author in the age of Nero. His arguments appear to me inconclusive. The seventh eclogue, describing the amphitheatre, ends with an allusion to the emperor of the day, which seems to point much better to Domitian: "Et Martis vultus et Apollinis esse putavi." Comp. Statius, *Sylv.* v. 1. 14.: "Quique venit juncto mihi semper Apolline Cæsar:" and i. 1. 18.

[2] For these details see Becker's *Röm. Alterthümer*, i. 682., and the other topographers. Nibby is said to have given the most complete description of the Colosseum, and his successors have borrowed from him and from one another. The measures given in the text are from the art. "*Amphitheatrum*" in Smith's *Dict. of Class. Antiquities.* Becker states them from Melchiori at 157, 581, 481, 285, 182 respectively in Roman feet, which are to the English as 11·649: 12. The number of spectators accommodated is ascertained from a statement in the *Notitia.*

which they were executed gave little room for the display of original taste and special character. The architect of the Parthenon or the Capitol was almost equally confined to the pattern of his own times. To a lesser extent we observe the same peculiarity in regard to our mediæval edifices, the designers of which, if in some cases recorded, are seldom put prominently forward, and have attained little celebrity. It is only in periods of eclecticism and renaissance, when the taste of the architect has wider scope, and may lead the age instead of following it, that interest attaches to his personal merit. Thus it is that the Colosseum, the most conspicuous type of Roman civilization, the monument which divides the admiration of strangers in modern Rome with St. Peter's itself, is nameless and parentless, while every stage in the construction of the great Christian temple, the creation of a modern revival, is appropriated with jealous care to its special claimant. Yet if there be any value in posthumous celebrity, to be popularly known as the creator of an object which has filled the eyes and engaged the sympathies of sixty generations; which has been the familiar home of millions of our species, and has dwelt in the memories of millions more; in which the recollections of a dead antiquity have so long centered, and which has become the most visible of the links connecting the past with the present;—to be renowned as the creator of such an object should be a crown of ambition not less dazzling than the fame of excellence in history or epic.

The building of the Colosseum was the work of several years, nor was it completed and consecrated till after the death of its founder. The reign of Vespasian, extending over one decade, passed away in uneventful tranquillity, ruffled only for a moment, after the termination of the Jewish war, by one or two abortive attempts at usur-

Death of Vespasian. A.D. 79. A.U. 832.

pation, which were firmly quelled, but with no excessive or feverish violence. The character of this prince is sullied by no unnecessary severity, unless we must except the strange story, already related, of Sabinus and Eponina.[1] His administration was justly respected at home, and feared not less justly abroad. No Roman emperor laboured more assiduously in the path of honest, frugal, and yet liberal government: none kept the military establishments of the state on a more imposing footing, or maintained a firmer attitude of defence in the face of all its enemies. At the age of seventy, full of toils and honours, he was called at last to his rest by mere natural decay; but his death was perhaps accelerated by the immoderate use of the cold springs of Cutiliæ, in his native Sabine country.[2] During his illness, which was of some duration, he refused to relax in any degree from the routine of public business, and when obliged to keep his bed, insisted on the admission even of strangers to his presence. In the crisis of his disorder he demanded, possibly in an access of delirium, to be raised upright, exclaiming that an Imperator ought *to die standing*; a phrase which, whether truly ascribed to him or not, may fairly represent his character, as the soul of military discipline and official formality, armed with strong endurance and unflinching constancy.[3] Though we find it impossible to feel enthusiasm for the plebeian emperor, the head of the

[1] Victor says of him (*Epit.* 9.): "Hujus inter cætera bona illud singulare fuit, inimicitias oblivisci; adeo ut Vitellii, hostis sui, filiam locupletissime dotatam splendidissimo conjungeret viro. Ferebat patienter amicorum motus," &c. Comp. *de Cæsar.* 9. init.

[2] Cutiliæ, on the Velinus near Reate; celebrated for its cold springs, Strab. v.; Plin. *H. N.* iii. 12., and for a floating island on its lake. Senec. *Nat. Quæst.* iii. 25.

[3] Suet. *Vesp.* 24.; Dion. lxvi. 17. Victor, *Epit.* 9.: "Sanctus omnia." The reign of Vespasian extended from July 1, 822, the day of the salutation, to his death, June 23, 832. He had adopted the practice of holding the consulship regularly year after year, declining it once only during his residence at Rome.

Flavian firm, we cannot part from Vespasian without avowing a higher regard for him than for any of the Cæsars before him, the great Julius, the universal exception, alone excepted.[1]

Vespasian, with admirable prudence, had admitted his son Titus, the darling of the army of Judea, to a share of the imperial power, on his return from the East. We have seen how large a share the younger prince took in the duties of the censorship, and we are assured that it was not as a designated successor, nor as a deputed vicegerent, that he was associated with his father in all the other functions of sovereign rule. The historian Dion declares accordingly that he cannot draw a line between the termination of the one reign and the commencement of the other; and I will follow him in continuing the thread of my narrative also without interruption.[2] The younger Flavius was born at the end of the year which witnessed the assassination of Caius, and in consequence of the favour in which his father was held in the palace, he had been introduced as a child into the court of Claudius and educated with the infant Britannicus.[3] An astrologer whom Narcissus had employed to cast the young prince's horoscope had ventured, it was said, to predict that Britannicus would never succeed to power, but that

Titus assumes the empire.

[1] Tacitus characterizes Vespasian coldly and harshly: "Prorsus si avaritia abesset, antiquis ducibus par." *Hist.* ii. 5. We have seen how necessary even parsimony might be to his position, and how nobly he redeemed it by justice and moderation. The same writer also speaks of him as the only emperor whose character was improved by the possession of power; which seems to be a sneer against his forced submission to Nero's tyranny. But again I must repeat that Tacitus too often makes himself the mouthpiece of senatorian prejudices.

[2] Dion, lxvi. 17. Comp. Suet. *Tit.* 6.: "Neque ex eo destitit participem atque etiam tutorem imperii agere."

[3] Death of Caligula, Jan. 24, A. D. 41. Birth of Titus, Dec. 30, of the same year. Suet. *Tit.* 1.: "Natus est tertio kal. Jan. insigni anno Caiana nece." Britannicus was born in 42.

Titus, who was standing by, the son of a good officer now beginning to be noticed, would actually attain to it.[1] We learn, on graver authority, that when Vespasian sent his eldest son to offer to Galba the devotion of the eastern legions, it was commonly surmised that the still youthful favourite of the army would be adopted by the old and childless emperor.[2] Titus had now served with distinction both in Germany and Britain: his skill in martial exercises was equalled by his intellectual accomplishments; his conduct and prudence in affairs gave promise of a statesman and administrator, and his abilities were set off to advantage by the beauty of his figure and countenance.[3] But beneath the reserved and measured blandness of the Roman popular chief, there was in Titus an impulsive enthusiasm, fostered by his connexion with the East, and warmed perhaps to a fervent glow by his romantic attachment to a Jewish princess. He was the lover and slave of Berenice, the sister of Agrippa; and when, on hearing of the movements in progress against Galba, he turned back from his journey westward and left his mission unfulfilled, it was surmised that his vacillation was the result of passion rather than of policy. He paused to visit the temple of the Paphian Venus. The goddess was worshipped on the spot

Relations of Titus with Berenice.

[1] Suet. *Tit.* 2., confirmed by an allusion in Tacitus, *Hist.* ii. 1.: "Præsaga responsa."

[2] Suet. *Tit.* 5.; Tac. *Hist.* ii. 1. Comp. Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iv. 9. 2.

[3] Besides skill in music and versification, it is specially mentioned that Titus was a rapid short-hand writer, and had, moreover, a knack of imitating the writing of others, so that he used to say of himself in jest that he might have made an expert forger. Suet. *Tit.* 3.; Victor. *Epit.* 10. For his personal beauty see Tac. *Hist.* ii. 1. v. 1., fully confirmed by busts and medals. For his eloquence see Pliny's preface; the whole tone of which assumes him to have been a man of literary accomplishments. Sil. Ital. iii. 60[illegible]:

"Tum juvenis magno præcellens robore mentis
Excipiet patriam molem, celsusque feretur
Æquatum imperio tollens caput."

were she emerged from the waters to rule mankind, not in the most exquisite of human forms, such as that revealed to her subjects by Apelles and Praxiteles, but under a rude and shapeless emblem, the meaning of which, for ages forgotten, had once perhaps been comprehended by Tyrian and Sidonian mariners. Here was an oracle still in high repute, and Titus consulted it about the success of his voyage to Syria. Receiving a favourable answer on this point, he was encouraged to inquire, still indirectly, about his political fortunes. The oracle was cautious, and veiled its reply in general conventionalities. But the priest then beckoned him into an inner chamber, and there disclosed without reserve the splendid destiny awaiting him. The promise of power was indeed a deathblow to love. The Roman chief was well aware that his countrymen would not suffer a Jewish concubine to usurp the place of Livia and Agrippina. But Titus accepted his fate. Venus in her own temple yielded the palm to her rival Juno.

Gentle character of Titus.

The time, however, for this sacrifice had not yet arrived. The lover was first to be the instrument for the destruction of his mistress's city and nation. Our accounts represent an uncertainty and vacillation in the conduct of Titus before Jerusalem unlike anything we read of in other portions of Roman story. We call his treatment of the enemy barbarous, yet among the Romans, and possibly among the Jews themselves, it bore, as compared with many familiar examples, the character of unusual clemency. The anxiety he manifested, according to the testimony of Josephus, to spare the people, the city, and above all the temple of the Jews, strongly contrasts with the ruthless ferocity of other Roman conquerors. All history bears witness to the softness and almost feminine gentleness of his disposition, and even in the horrors of the siege of Jerusalem, whether from superstition or from a ten-

derer feeling, Titus seems to have deserved the character thus ascribed to him.[1] The mild and yielding temper with which he is painted appears again in the romance, for such it must be designated, on the life of Apollonius. The sophist is represented as conversing with him at Alexandria with the utmost freedom, giving him advice how to conduct himself in the government, recommending to him pedantic counsellors with all a pedant's assurance, and accepting with complacence the homage of the young philosopher on the steps of the throne.[2] Whatever may have really been the influence of Apollonius over him, it would seem that Berenice retained his heart in complete subjection, though she could make no impression on his judgment. Titus the imperator obeyed the commands of public duty to the letter. He overthrew Jerusalem, dispersed the Jews, abolished their political nationality, and absorbed in the empire the realm once swayed by his mistress and her brother; but he still knelt as a lover at her feet, and after the fall of her country invited her to visit him at Rome, lodged her in the imperial palace, and acknowledged her publicly as his favourite. Wife, in the Roman sense, she could not be; yet to men in private stations at least, to men of all degrees anywhere outside the walls of Rome, the law allowed and society tolerated the possession of a foreign con-

[1] When allowance is made for the exaggeration of which Josephus is convicted, it will appear that the severities of Titus towards the Jews, however frightful, fell far short of the ordinary atrocities of Roman warfare. The efforts he made to save the city, and at last the temple, were an exception to the general rule of destruction which had been carried out against Carthage, Syracuse, Corinth, and many less conspicuous capitals. But the Roman generals were often moved to tears. Thus Marcellus wept over Syracuse, Scipio Æmilianus over Carthage. Paulus Æmilius shed tears at the fate of Perseus. Liv. xxv. 24., xlv. 4.; Polyb. xxxix. fragm. 2.; Dubois-Guchan, *Tacite et son Siècle*, ii. 288.: "Cet inconcévable mélange de pitié et d'inflexibilité est tout Romain."

[2] Philostratus *in vit. Apollon.* vi. 29, foll. vii. 8.

sort. The Romans winked at the irregular union between Vespasian himself and a Grecian concubine. But there was something peculiarly hateful to them in the character of the Egyptian, the Syrian, and above all perhaps at this period the Jewess; and when Titus appeared as associate emperor in the city, with Berenice by his side, their prejudices rose in arms against the scandal, and were not to be appeased without the complete sacrifice of the connexion. Titus gave way; the lovers reluctantly bade farewell; and Berenice returned desolately to her desolate country.[1] After the death of Vespasian she once more visited Rome, hoping perhaps that her former admirer, now sole emperor, might exercise his independence in her favour. But Titus had learnt to control his inclinations effectually, and among the many proofs he gave of patriotism in the possession of power, was the firmness with which he rejected the blandishments of the foreign enchantress.[2]

Favour with which Titus was regarded by the Romans.

The favour with which Titus was early regarded was manifested in many ways. The Romans specified with interest the spot where he had first seen the light, an obscure house in an obscure corner of the city, and they continued for a century later to point it out as a relic of ancient Rome which had escaped the fire of Nero, and the other fires that had since occurred.[3]

[1] Suet. *Tit.* 7.: "Dimisit invitus invitam." Dion seems to place this separation in 828, five years after Titus's return. The lady, born in 781, would then be 47 years of age. Perhaps we need not take Dion's date strictly, and the event may have occurred somewhat earlier.

[2] Dion, lxvi. 15. 18. Titus remained henceforth unmarried. In early life he had been united to Arricidia Tertulla, of an equestrian family, and on her death he had espoused Marcia Furnilla, who bore him a daughter, to whom he gave the imperial but ill-omened name of Julia. The date of this daughter's birth is undetermined, but it must be some years prior to her father's association in the empire, and the mother seems also to have died before it. Suet. *Domit.* 22.

[3] Suet. *Tit.* 1.

They readily accepted as a fact the story, which can be shown by a comparison of dates to be groundless, that as a young man he had saved his father's life in battle with the Britons.[1] They believed that he had been present at the banquet at which Britannicus was poisoned, and had even tasted of the fatal cup, to which they ascribed his subsequent weakness of health and premature dissolution. The stories of the dissipation in which he indulged after his return to Rome, and the scandal he brought on the austere manners of his family, elevated by merit to the first place among the citizens, might have caused little remark but for the severity with which he exercised the censorial office, and the hostility he excited among the knights and senators.[2] At all events the nobler elements in his character must have become better known during his association in the empire, and the dislike in which he may at first have been held, was undoubtedly much mitigated before the death of his father.[3] His succession might be accepted as inevitable, but had he been so extremely unpopular it would have been easy to insist on the association of his brother with him; or if Domitian were even more offensive, other measures might have been adopted to control his authority, and make him feel the precariousness of his power. But not a movement was made, not a murmur raised. Titus occupied the

[1] Titus was born at the end of 794; see a preceding note. Vespasian's great campaign in Britain was in 797, and if he continued for some time longer in the island, he must have returned to Rome in 804, the year of his consulship, when Titus was not yet ten years of age. It is not likely, out of favour as he was with Agrippina, that Vespasian ever resumed a command in Britain.

[2] Suet. *Tit.* 7.: "Præter sævitiam suspecta in eo etiam luxuria erat . . . . nec minus libido. . . . . Suspecta et rapacitas . . . denique propalam alium Neronem et opinabantur et prædicabant."

[3] Suet. *Tit.* 6.: "Ut non temere quis tam adverso rumore, magisque invitis omnibus, transierit ad principatum." There is some looseness in this last expression, and Suetonius may be confounding the association with the succession.

throne alone. Of his own free grace he declared his brother the partner of his empire, and signified that he would appoint him his successor; but he betrayed no jealousy of the nobles, no apprehension of their discontent, no uneasy consciousness of their dislike. The frankness with which he treated all classes of his subjects shows that he felt himself on terms of confidence with them. If their affection to him had ever wavered, he speedily recovered it and maintained it without interruption to the end.

However this may be, the short biography we possess of this emperor is henceforth chiefly occupied with the praise of his goodness and liberality. His prosecution of the hateful race of delators was unrelenting. Among the first victims of the Colosseum were the wretches who had been driven by their own necessities and those of the state, to inform against fiscal defaulters in the higher ranks. They were seized, bound, scourged in the amphitheatre, sold into slavery, or banished to the islands.[1] Titus took from no man, he gave to all profusely, he made a point of never sending a suitor away unsatisfied. *No man*, he said, in answer to a prudential remonstrance, *ought to leave the prince's presence disappointed.* Remembering one evening at supper that he had made no present to any one since the morning, *My friends*, he exclaimed, *I have lost this day.*[2] When certain

He combines the suffrages both of the nobles and the populace.

[1] Suet. *Tit.* 8. Titus legislated for the greater security of the subject against the informers. "Vetuit de eadem re pluribus legibus agi," *i. e.* the shifting the ground of action from one law to another, "quærique de cujusquam defunctorum statu ultra certos annos." The inheritance, for instance, of unmarried men fell under the Papian law to the treasury, and it was important in the interest of the government to ascertain the civil condition of the deceased.

[2] Suet. *l.c.*: "Amici, diem perdidi;" a phrase which has obtained higher appreciation than it seems, when taken with the context, to deserve. It is repeated by Eutropius and Victor; the last writer calls it, "divinum et cœleste." See also Ausonius, *Gratiar. Act. in Gratianum Imp.*

nobles were detected conspiring against him, he not only pardoned, but treated them with peculiar kindness; and when they attended him in the amphitheatre, gave them the swords of the gladiators to feel their edges, thus putting his life unreservedly in their power.[1] Towards his people his demeanour was bland and affable. He insisted sometimes on abdicating the functions of umpire in the shows which he himself exhibited, and left it to them to determine their merits, contenting himself with the part of a private spectator. The features here delineated may be thought perhaps to represent the general type of a popular favourite. But the point to remark in them is the completeness with which they combine the champion of the nobles with the idol of the multitude. It was not easy to maintain the privileges and cherish the self-respect of the one class, and at the same time to humour the tastes and caprices of the other. Augustus had betrayed his weariness at the entertainments of the vulgar; Tiberius had shrunk from them altogether. Caius and Nero had abandoned themselves to the people, and forfeited the regard of the nobles; the attempts of Vespasian to conciliate both had been but imperfectly successful. Titus was the first who seems to have gained equal credit on either side; and we may thus account for the pre-eminent favour he enjoyed with his countrymen, which they declared by the title, extravagant as it may seem, of *Delight of the human race.*[2]

Titus was beloved by the Romans, and those the

[1] Suet. *Tit.* 9.; Victor. *Epit.* 10. This story, which recurs again in the history of the next popular emperor, may be regarded as mythical.

[2] Suet. *Tit.* 1.: "Amor et deliciæ generis humani," a phrase repeated by Eutropius, vii. 14. Ausonius considers the defects of Vespasian a foil to the merits of his successor: "Cujus nimia parsimonia et austeritas vix ferenda miram fecerat filii lenitatem." *Gratiar. Act.* l. c.

Romans loved ever died young. Fate indeed did not always require that they should suffer; but the career of Titus was not only brief, but clouded in its latter years by a series of public disasters. The city was visited, in the first place, by a terrible conflagration, which raged unchecked for three days, and was second only in extent to that, hardly yet repaired, of Nero. The Capitol itself fell once more a prey to the flames.[1] Again Rome suffered from a pestilence, in which, if we may credit the statement of a late authority, ten thousand persons perished daily for some time together.[2] The great eruption of Vesuvius, which overwhelmed the cities of Campania, was perhaps more alarming, though the loss it inflicted might be much less considerable. The incident, as is well known, has been described to us in some detail, and it will be interesting to dwell upon it before we close the brief annals of this reign. A less popular prince might have been accused of himself setting fire to the city, and even the eruption and the pestilence might have been imputed to the divine vengeance on his crimes. But in this case the Romans were willing to charge the national sufferings on national sins. The wrath of the gods required no doubt a signal expiation, and the dedication of the Colosseum gave room for the display of pious magnificence on a scale hitherto

Disasters of the reign of Titus.

Fire at Rome, and pestilence. A. D. 80.

Dedication of the Colosseum.

[1] Suet. *Tit.* 8.; Dion, lxvi. 24. Originating, apparently, in the outskirts of the Campus Martius, this fire injured, rather than consumed, the Pantheon, and several circumjacent buildings. It then took a southerly direction, to follow the order of the names as given by Dion, attacking the Diribitorium, the theatres of Balbus and Pompeius, the portico of Octavia, and finally the Capitol. The S.W. summit of the Capitoline hill, on which, as I believe, the temple stood, immediately overlooked the "Octavian edifices," and would thus fall exactly within the line of the conflagration.

[2] This extravagant statement is given in the *Chronicon* of Eusebius, who, however, places it under the reign of Vespasian. Suspicion always attaches to the Christian accounts of Pagan calamities.

unrivalled. A battle of cranes with dwarfs representing the Pigmies was a fanciful novelty, and might afford diversion for a moment; there were combats of gladiators, among whom women were included, though no noble matron was allowed to mingle in the fray; and the capacity of the vast edifice was tested by the slaughter of five thousand animals within its circuit. The show was crowned with the immission of water into the arena, and with a sea fight representing the contest of the Corinthians and Corcyræans related by Thucydides. From the amphitheatre the spectators were invited to the Naumachia of Augustus, which seems to have afforded more room for naval evolutions, and here the siege of Syracuse by the Athenians was still more vividly portrayed. These exhibitions endured through a hundred days, and terminated in a scramble for tickets entitling the gainer to rations of bread, pork, and other eatables. The generosity of the most amiable of princes was the theme of every tongue, and the echoes of his praises still live in the meagre records of the time which have preserved so little besides. When indeed all was over, Titus himself was seen to weep, perhaps from fatigue, possibly from disgust and vexation; but his tears were interpreted as a presentiment of his death, which was now impending, and it is probable that he was already suffering from a decline of bodily strength. His health had been long feeble. He had tried in vain all the remedies suggested by the physicians, and afterwards by the priests. With superstitious feelings kindled at the Eastern altars, he sought to propitiate heaven by strange rites and sacrifices. His constitution, perhaps always delicate, possibly injured by poison imbibed in early life, was said to be weakened by the immoderate use of warm baths; but in the last stage of his disorder he desired to be conveyed to the Cutilian springs, where his father had sought to re-

invigorate his old age. Titus lamented effeminately the premature decease he too surely anticipated; and opening the curtains of his litter, looked wistfully at the heavens, exclaiming that he *did not deserve to die.*[1] He expired on the 13th of September, 81, having not quite completed his fortieth year. During the course of his short reign of two years and two months, counting from the death of Vespasian, he had religiously observed the principle which he had proclaimed on accepting the chief priesthood, that the hands of the gods' first minister should be kept free from any stain of blood.[2] No senator, no citizen fell by his orders. The Romans generously affirmed that he had committed no crime, and had discharged every duty. When he declared on his deathbed that there was but one thing of which he repented, they surmised that he was anxious about the fate of his countrymen under the sway of his brother, and accused himself of weakness in refraining from the punishment of Domitian's repeated intrigues against his life. Such are the soft and gentle traits that predominate to the last in this prince's character, a temper which may seem amiable at the outset of an imperial career, and raise hopes in the inexperienced; but which must be regarded with distrust and even with apprehension by those who have learnt the lessons of history. Titus inherited from his prudent parent a stable throne and a full treasury: had he lived to exhaust the treasury,—and his brief career was wantonly improvident,—he would soon have found his throne shaken, and been driven to acts of repression and tyranny which would have blackened his fame with posterity.

Death of Titus. A.D. 81. A.U. 834.

[1] Suet. *Tit.* 10.: "Eripi sibi vitam immerenti."

[2] Suet. *Tit.* 9.. "Periturum se potius quam perditurum affirmans." Various conflicting reports of the cause and manner of this prince's death are given by Suetonius, Dion, Plutarch, Victor, Eusebius, and others, and are collected by Reimar in a note to Dion, lxvi. 26.

It would be harsh on a mere guess at future possibilities, to liken him to Nero, from whom he differed, as we have seen, in many essential features; nevertheless we may accede to the judgment which was finally passed on him by his countrymen, and which settled into a maxim with later ages, that he was fortunate in the briefness of his power.[1]

View of Titus's character taken by the Christians and the Jews.

The virtuous character which the Romans agreed to ascribe to Titus has not been impugned by the compilers of Christian tradition. The conqueror of Jerusalem had learnt perhaps from his intercourse with the Eastern spiritualists to regard with religious awe the great events in which he had borne a part, and to conceive of himself as of a special minister of the divine judgments. As such he was hailed without hesitation by the historian Orosius, who expounds the course of Providence in Roman affairs from the point of view of the Christians.[2] The closing of Janus on the fall of the Jewish city appears to this writer a counterpart to the announcement of universal peace at the birth of Jesus. He passes lightly over the calamities of Titus's reign, the fire, the pestilence, and the volcanic eruptions, as well as his premature decease, all which, had he lifted a hand against the Christians, would have been branded as manifest tokens of divine vengeance.[3] But with the Jews it was far otherwise.

[1] Ausonius, *Ordo Imperat.*: "Titus imperii felix brevitate." Comp. Dion, lxvi. 18.: *τάχα ἂν ἐλεγχθεὶς εἰγὲ ἐπὶ μακρόν ἐβεβιώκει ὅτι εὐτυχίᾳ πλείονι ἢ ἀρέτῃ ἐχρήσατο.*

[2] Though we may smile at the confidence with which Orosius has judged the divine decrees, we must signalize him as the first secular historian who directed men's views to the providential guidance of human history, an inevitable subject of Christian speculation, however hazardous, of which we may say, like the science of the mathematici, "et vetabitur semper et retinebitur."

[3] Oros. vii. 9. Comp. Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 12. 17. A late Christian historian, of inferior authority, Sulpicius Severus, asserts that Titus was induced to destroy the Temple, from the idea that it was the centre and stronghold of the Christian faith, *Hist. Sacr.* ii. 44.; and it has been attempted to show that this writer took his in-

By them the memory of the Flavian princes was naturally held in the deepest abhorrence. They asserted that Vespasian commenced a cruel persecution of the presumed lineage of the royal David. The disasters of the doomed principate of Titus they regarded with grim exultation. They gloated over his shattered health, which they attributed to divine vengeance, and inserted among their legends a wild account of the nature of his sufferings. The conqueror of Jerusalem, they said, had desecrated the Temple of the Most High with orgies suited to the shrine of the Paphian Venus. He had pierced the veil with his sword, before tearing it down to wrap the sacred vessels, and transport them to Rome. Assailed on his voyage homeward, and nigh to perishing by tempest, he had impiously exclaimed, *The god of the Jews who drowned Pharaoh has power on the waters, but I am more than his match on land.* Jehovah suffered him to gain the shore, and there, in scorn of the scorner, sent a gnat to creep into his nostrils and lodge itself in his brain. For seven years the restless insect gnawed the vital tissue. One day, when the tortured prince passed by a blacksmith's forge, the thunders of the hammer seemed to startle and arrest it. Four pieces of silver daily did the sufferer give to have the noise continued in his ear without ceasing. At the end of thirty miserable days the insect became accustomed to the clang, and resumed his ravages. Phineas, the son of Erouba, was present with the

Jewish legend on the death of Titus.

formation from the lost narrative of Tacitus. Some of the phrases of Sulpicius may, indeed, remind us of the style of Tacitus: "At contra alii et Titus ipse evertendum templum imprimis censebant: quo plenius Judæorum et Christianorum religio tolleretur. Quippe has religiones, licet contrarias sibi, iisdem tamen auctoribus profectas; Christianos ex Judæis exstitisse; *radice sublata stirpem facile perituram*," &c. But Sulpicius is a manifest imitator, and we need not infer from such an apparent resemblance that he actually copied the words of Tacitus.

chief nobles of Rome at the death of the emperor. The Jewish witness reported that the head of the deceased was opened, and the creature was there discovered as big as a swallow, with a brazen beak and claws of iron.[1]

Destruction of Herculaneum and Pompeii.

Thus it is that the disappearance from the stage of life of a weak, though perhaps a pleasing unit in the great sum, may be recorded by many pens, remembered through many generations, attended with sighs or sneers of millions, if fortune has placed it in a conspicuous position. Almost at the same moment, whole hives of human beings, historic cities, monuments of the arts of ages, may subside into annihilation, and pass, almost without notice, into the night of oblivion. Herculaneum and Pompeii vanished from before the eyes of Italy, like the scenes of a theatre, and their awful disappearance, strange to say, attracted hardly a more lasting interest. Yet, the disaster itself was one of the most signal in human annals, and is connected with circumstances which have been related for us in a picturesque and striking manner, and have engaged the sympathies of many readers through a long succession of ages. The same eruption of Vesuvius which overwhelmed the cities of Campania, scorched and stifled the great naturalist Pliny, and the account of the catastrophe is minutely detailed by the most elegant writer of the day, himself partly an eyewitness.

Changes in the physical aspect of Vesuvius and the Campanian coast.

We have learnt from moralists the habit of contrasting the works of art and nature, as types of the perishable and the eternal. Yet in some respects, and under certain conditions, the outward framework of nature is not less liable to change and dissolution than that of mere human creations. In the Colosseum, as it

[1] Salvador, from the Talmud: *Domin. Rom. en Judée*, ii. 498.

now stands before us, broken down through one half of its circumference, and at one spot almost levelled to the ground, its columns and architraves ruined or defaced, its surface ruffled with the scars of time, or the rank foliage of a wild vegetation, we behold no more than the wreck of the glorious amphitheatre which rose in complete majesty before the gaze of Vespasian and Pliny. But if we turn our eyes to the great features of the Bay of Naples, its shores, its plains, and its central mountain, we may remark that the destruction of two considerable cities was one of the least of the changes effected in the scene, by the revival of volcanic agency which dates from this period, in the region of Vesuvius. This mountain had been the greatest of nature's amphitheatres; the ridge of its truncated cone was level, like the cornice of the Colosseum; its sides, steep and even, were adorned with the fairest of nature's handy work, with forests of oak, chestnut, and ilex on the north, with vines, cultivated or growing wild to its summit, on the south.[1] The interior of the summit was more or less depressed, and the masses of igneous formation, and broken furrows which scarred or seamed it, betokened to thoughtful observers that it was the choked-up crater of a volcano extinct for ages.[2] The erup-

[1] Strabo (v. 4. p. 247.) describes the fertility of the slope up to its summit: *τὸ ὄρος τὸ Οὐεσσούιον, ἀγροῖς περιουκούμενον παγκάλοις, πλὴν τῆς κορυφῆς· αὕτη δ' ἐπίπεδος μὲν πολὺ μέρος ἐστίν.* The forest trees of the region have been found to spring abundantly, at least on the northern side, whenever the mountain has been long at rest, as before the eruption of 1611; but Martial celebrates its vineyards in his time, iv. 43.: "Hic est pampineis viridis modo Vesvius umbris," and the followers of Spartacus escaped from the crater by ropes of twisted wild vines. Plutarch, *Crass.* 10.

[2] Strabo, *l. c.*; whose description, however, does not favour the idea of a deep crater at that period, nor indeed does Plutarch's account imply it, though often cited with that view. Vitruvius, in the time of Augustus, recognises the tradition of Vesuvius as a volcano, ii. 6.: "Non minus etiam memoretur antiquitus crevisse ardores et abundavisse sub Vesuvio monte, et inde evomuisse circa agros flammam." Comp. Diodor. Sic. iv. 21.

tion of the year 79 effected, possibly at one blow, the ruin of this amphitheatre, such as it has taken centuries to accomplish in the Flavian Colosseum. One half of its sides have been completely blown away; the remainder has been abraded and lowered almost throughout; the apex alone, now known by the name of Monte di Somma, may still show the level of the original crater. But from the floor of this amphitheatre has risen another cone, which has almost filled it with its accumulating débris, and has at times exceeded the height of Somma; much as if a larger pyramid than that of Cestius had been piled on the arena of the Colosseum.[1] From this cone torrents of molten rocks, and showers of burning cinders, have been for ages ejected, and the luxuriant vegetation of the mountain slopes has been consumed or buried for many hundred feet from the summit. The peaceful charms of Vesuvius, such as they appeared to the eyes of Virgil and Tiberius, have been transformed to terrible majesty, and the long swelling outline of the fertile hill has been broken by frowning cliffs and jagged pinnacles.[2] Nor are the changes produced on the plain and along the coast-line less signal than the transformation of the ancient mountain. The Lucrine lake has been choked by the uplifting of a mighty cone from its abysses.

[1] Monte di Somma is 3450 (French) feet high. The cone, which is known by the name of Vesuvius, has been recently 3700, and at one time is said to have exceeded 4000. It was reduced by the eruption of 1855 to a level with the rival summit, and it has been stated by eye-witnesses of the agitation of 1861, that it has now sunk a little below it. Every year, in fact, in modern times, has produced more or less change in the features of the mountain.

[2] The date of the *Argonautica* and *Punica* may be determined from allusions to fatal activity of Vesuvius. Valer. Fl. iii. 208.: "Mugitor anhelat Vesvius;" iv. 507.: "Sic ubi prorupti tonuit cum forte Vesevi Hesperiæ letalis apex." Silius Ital. xvii. 594.: "Evomuit pastos per sæcula Vesvius ignes." Statius recurs more than once to the subject, which was peculiarly interesting to him as a native of Neapolis. See *Sylv.* iv. 4. 78., iv. 8. 4., v. 3. 205.

The foundations of the mole of Puteoli have been sunk many feet into the sea, and raised again, though not to their original level. Various remains of Roman buildings, and lines of road along the shore, may be now spied beneath the waters; while on the other hand long strands of shingle have been heaved above the surface, at the foot of hills which the action of the waves had once scarped into precipitous cliffs. There has been in fact first a subsidence, and again a raising of the whole coast; but the distance at which the ruins of Pompeii now lie from the sea which once washed its walls, is attributed not so much to a change of the relative levels of land and water, as to the accretion of volcanic matter from Vesuvius. Pompeii itself is covered with a mass of ashes long since converted into mould, and rife with the seeds of vegetation, to the depth of about fifteen feet; but Herculaneum after suffering a like catastrophe has since been more than once overwhelmed by streams of lava, which have gained a thickness of more than twice as many yards. From such data we may imagine how entirely the face of the country has been changed along the southern base of the mountain which has been so great an agent of destruction and renovation.[1]

Sixteen years before the date of this fatal eruption, the populous town of Pompeii had been afflicted with a terrible earthquake; but the language both of Tacitus and Seneca, who speak of it as swallowed up or destroyed, is plainly exaggerated. The remains discovered in modern times attest the fact of a convulsion which

Pompeii afflicted with an earthquake. A. D. 63.

[1] There is something affecting in the delight with which Pliny describes the charms of the Campanian coast on which he was so soon to perish in a general catastrophe. See *Hist. Nat.* iii. 9.: "Hinc felix illa Campania est. Ab hoc sinu incipiunt vitiferi colles et temulentia nobilis succo per omnes terras inclyto. . . . hæc litora calidis fontibus rigantur. . . . et hoc quoque *certamen humanæ voluptatis* tenuere Osci, Græci," &c.

had overturned some of the principal buildings; but all the ordinary habitations of the people were standing, and the place was as full of residents as ever, engaged in their usual concerns, when the final catastrophe overtook it.[1] Pompeii was a maritime city at the mouth of the river Sarnus, the most sheltered recess of the Neapolitan crater. Its origin was lost in antiquity, and the tradition that it was founded by Hercules, together with the other spot which bore the name of the demigod, was derived perhaps from the warm springs with which the region abounded. The Greek plantations on the Campanian coast had been overrun by the Oscans and Samnites; nevertheless the graceful features of Grecian civilization were still everywhere conspicuous, and though Pompeii received a Latin name, and though Sulla, Augustus, and Nero had successively endowed it with Roman colonists, it retained the manners and to a great extent the language of the settlers from beyond the sea.[2] The accident which buried this provincial city under a mass of cinders, and preserved its basement at least inviolate for seventeen centuries, has

[1] There is a discrepancy of one year in the date of the earthquake in Seneca and Tacitus. The first, who was a contemporary, places it in the consulship of Regulus and Virginius (U.C. 816, A.D. 63); the other, writing six years later, assigns it to the year before. We may admit with Brotier the possibility of the shocks having commenced in the one year and terminated in the next. Seneca, however, with extraordinary coolness, speaks of the entire subsidence of the city: "Pompeios celebrem Campaniæ urbem, ... desedisse terræ motu, Lucili virorum optime, audivimus." *Nat. Quæst.* vi. 1. Tacitus less strongly: "Et motu terræ celebre Campaniæ oppidum, Pompeii, magna ex parte proruit." *Ann.* xv. 22. In the *Hist.* i. 2.: "Haustæ aut obrutæ urbes:" in the one case, swallowed up in streams of lava; in the other overwhelmed by showers of ashes.

[2] The style of building at Pompeii is essentially Greek, but such as the Romans at this time adopted whenever an opportunity occurred; on the other hand, the Romans imposed on their Grecian subjects some of the worst of their own fashions. In the time of Nero, Pompeii was deprived of its public shows for ten years, as a punishment for an affray that had occurred there during a gladiatorial exhibition. Tac. *Ann.* xiv. 17.

furnished us with means, which we should vainly seek in any other part of the world, of comparing modern forms of life with those of the mixed Græco-Romans of the empire.

Into these details this is not the place to enter; but the account we have received of the fatal eruption is valuable for the study of Roman character, as well as for its own intrinsic interest. The writer is the younger Pliny, the nephew of the great naturalist, who describes it in two well-known letters.[1] The elder Pliny, the friend and devoted servant of Vespasian and Titus, at this time commanded the imperial fleet at Misenum, and divided his time with marvellous assiduity between the discharge of official duties, and the accumulation of extraordinary stores of knowledge. Remarkable for his industry even among the industrious statesmen of his country, Pliny had served the commonwealth at home and abroad, in peace and war, in the highest posts, never intermitting throughout his career the habit of reading, noting, and composing, till, notwithstanding the multifarious business in which he had been immersed, his completed works and his collections for future arrangement had together reached an extent almost appalling to the imagination.[2] His compositions on contemporary history seem to have soon fallen into oblivion, and we possess no testimony to their merits; but the great work by which we know him became the recognised repertory of all the accepted facts of Nature, and its utility secured its preservation. His labour in collecting facts, and his assiduity, and to a great extent

The great eruption of Vesuvius described by the younger Pliny.

[1] Plin. *Ep.* vi. 16, 20.

[2] Plin. *Ep.* iii. 5. The contemporary, or nearly contemporary, histories were: 1. A life of Pomponius Secundus; 2. A continuation of the history of Aufidius Bassus; 3. An account of the German wars.

skill, in arranging them, deserve our highest admiration; he was not gifted, however, with much talent for observation; still less does he deserve from his powers of analysis or combination to be ranked with his master Aristotle. But the ardent thirst for knowledge which impelled him to seek the scene of interest and danger, might have done honour to the wisest of philosophers, and the name of Pliny will ever be memorable as of an ancient martyr of science. Such was the irony of fate, that while the most illustrious explorer of nature, our own immortal Bacon, died from a vulgar cold caught in the ignoble experiment of stuffing a fowl with snow, his predecessor, far his inferior in genius and intelligence, perished gloriously in the examination of a grand volcanic phenomenon.

The elder Pliny examines the eruption, and perishes in it.

On the 24th of August in the year 79, Pliny was residing in his villa on the Misenian promontory, which lies about twenty miles in a direct line from the summit of Vesuvius, conspicuous across the Gulf of Naples. His attention was drawn from his books and writings to a cloud of unusual form and character, which hung over the mountain, and rose, as appeared on further examination, from it, spreading out from a slender and well-defined stem, like the figure of a pine-tree.[1] Its colour changed rapidly from black to white, as the contents of the ejected mass of which it proved to be composed, were earth or ashes. The admiral ordered his Liburnian cutter to be manned, and casting aside

[1] Plin. *Ep.* vi. 16.: "Cujus similitudinem et formam non alia magis arbor, quam pinus, expresserit. Nam longissimo velut trunco elata in altum, quibusdam ramis diffundebatur;" *i.e.* with a vertical stem and horizontal head; such as the phenomenon has often been described by subsequent observers. Scacchi, however, noted a different appearance in the eruption of 1850: the smoke was carried off in a long horizontal stream at a small elevation. Roth, *Vesuv.* p. 248. (1857).

his papers prepared to cross the water, and observe the phenomenon nearer. He asked his nephew to accompany him, but the younger student was too intent on the volumes before him to prosecute an inquiry into the operations of nature.[1] Meanwhile intelligence arrived from the terrified residents at the foot of the mountain. They implored the powerful assistance of the commander of the fleet. Pliny directed his largest vessels to be got ready, and steered to the point nearest to the danger. As he approached the shore the ashes began to fall thick and hot upon his deck, with showers of glowing stones. A shoal formed suddenly beneath his keel, and impeded his progress. Turning a little to the right, he came to land at Stabiæ, at the dwelling of a friend. Here he restored confidence to the affrighted occupants by the calmness of his demeanour, while he insisted on taking the usual refreshment of the bath and supper, and conversed with easy hilarity. As the shades of evening gathered the brightness of the flames became more striking; but to calm the panic of those around him, the philosopher assured them that they arose from cottages on the slope, which the alarmed rustics had abandoned to the descending flakes of fire. He then took his customary brief night's rest, sleeping composedly as usual; but his attendants were not so easily tranquillized, and as the night advanced, the continued fall of ashes within the courts of the mansion convinced them that delay would make escape impossible. They roused their master, together with the friend at whose house he was resting, and hastily debated how to proceed. By this time the soil around them was rocking with repeated shocks of earthquake, which recalled the horrors of the still recent catas-

[1] Plin. *l. c.*: "Respondi, studere me malle:—*et forte ipse, quod scriberem, dederat.*" The apologetical whisper in the last clause is exquisite.

trophe. The party quitted the treacherous shelter of the house-roof, and sought the coast in hopes of finding vessels to take them off. To protect themselves from the thickening cinders they tied cushions to their heads. The sky was darkened by the ceaseless shower, and they groped their way by torchlight, and by the intermitting flashes from the mountain.[1] The sea was agitated, and abandoned by every bark. Pliny, wearied or perplexed, now stretched himself on a piece of sail-cloth, and refused to stir farther, while on the bursting forth of a fiercer blast accompanied with sulphureous gases, his companions, all but two body-slaves, fled in terror. Some who looked back in their flight affirmed that the old man rose once with the help of his attendants, but immediately fell again, overpowered, as it seemed, with the deadly vapours. When the storm abated and light at last returned, the body was found abandoned on the spot; neither the skin nor the clothes were injured, and the calm expression of the countenance betokened death by suffocation.

Pompeii and Herculaneum abandoned and almost forgotten.

Such is the account the younger Pliny gives of his uncle's death from hearsay. In another letter he relates the circumstances which he himself witnessed from his safer post at Misenum, and as might be expected with more vividness and distinctness;[2] and allowance

[1] The ashes, as Dion had been informed, were wafted not only to Rome, where they were supposed to have caused the pestilence which ensued, but to Africa, Syria, and Egypt. Dion, lxvi. 23. Similar effects, extraordinary as they may appear, have been observed in modern eruptions. Valerius Flaccus, a contemporary, seizes upon this incident for a novel simile, comparing it to the rapid flight of the Harpies (iv. 508.):

"Vix dum ignea montem
Torsit hyems, jamque Eoas cinis induit urbes."

[2] Plin. *Ep.* vi. 20. Both this and the other letter are addressed by the writer to his friend Tacitus, with a view to the account of his own

must be made for the vanity and frivolity of expression which disfigure, it must be confessed, the dreadful tale from the youth of the narrator, who was but eighteen at the time. It may be observed that his remarks give no indication of the streams of mud or lava, which form generally the most destructive features of volcanic convulsions. The projected volume of solid matter, such as sand and ashes in a state of ignition, consumed, as we have seen, all the habitations of man on which it lighted, or if its heat was a little abated by distance, engulfed them under a ponderous mass of dust and cinders. The shower was wafted perhaps in various directions by the shifting breezes; Herculaneum to the south-west, and Pompeii to the south-east of the mountain were completely overwhelmed by it, while other spots between them and around them escaped almost scatheless. The eruption seems to have been preceded by some premonitory shocks, and it is evident that these towns were in a great measure abandoned at the moment of the catastrophe; the descent, indeed, of the falling masses was not too sudden and precipitate to allow the people to fly themselves, and remove at least a portion of their effects.[1] Some attempts seem also to have been early made to revisit the scene of desolation, and repair the damage inflicted; but fresh heavings of the mountain, and repeated showers of ashes continued to baffle the survivors. New homes were found; the old treasures were abandoned when the spot where they lay could no longer be traced; and in the lapse of two or three generations the care-

times, which the great historian was then compiling: "Quo verius tradere posteris possis."

[1] Dion says loosely and inaccurately, lxvi. 23: *τό τε Ἑρκουλάνεον καὶ Πομπηΐους, ἐν θεάτρῳ τοῦ ὁμίλου αὐτῆς καθημένου, κατέχωσε.* This should refer to Pompeii; but the theatres excavated here and at Herculaneum present no remains of a buried population.

less loungers of the Campanian coast had forgotten even the site of the ruined cities beside them.[1]

[1] Statius, as might be expected, speaks more feelingly of the calamity than any of the few other writers who allude to it; but even he is ready, within ten or twelve years, to consign it to oblivion. Comp. *Sylv.* iv. 4. 81.:

"Mira fides: credetne virûm ventura propago,
Cum segetes iterum, cum jam hæc deserta virebunt,
Infra urbes populosque premi, proavitaque toto
Rura abiisse mari!"

The emperor Marcus Aurelius moralizes on the subject a century later: *Comment. de Vitâ suâ*, iv. 48.: *Ἐννοεῖν συνεχῶς πόσοι μὲν ἰατροὶ ἀποτεθνήκασι . . . πόσοι δὲ φιλόσοφοι . . . πόσοι δὲ τύραννοι. . . . . πόσοι δὲ πόλεις ὅλαι, ἵν' οὕτως εἴπω, τεθνήκασι, Ἑλίκη καὶ Πομπήϊοι καὶ Ἡράκλανον καὶ ἄλλαι ἀναρίθμητοι.*

CHAPTER LXI.

Domitian emperor.—His education and character.—External history of this reign.—Campaigns of Agricola in Britain, A.D. 78–84, A.U. 831–837.—He is recalled from the conquest of Caledonia.—Domitian's expedition against the Chatti, A.D. 84, A.U. 837.—He claims a victory, and assumes the title of Germanicus.—Fiscal necessities and commencement of confiscations.—Campaigns against the Dacians.—Defeat and death of Fuscus.—Victory of Julianus.—Peace with the Dacians, A.D. 90, A.U. 843.—A pretended Nero.—Successes in Africa.—Revolt of Antonius, A.D. 93, A.U. 846.—Renewed cruelties and alarms of Domitian.

Domitian assumes the empire. A.D. 81. A.U. 834.

It was reported that Domitian had intrigued against his father, and there was little question but that he had sought to supplant his brother. Rumour accused him further of having hastened the death of Titus, by causing him, in an access of his mortal fever, to be immersed in a bath of snow. Contemporary history affirmed at least for certain that he quitted his brother's bedside, while life was yet in him, and hurried to Rome to seize the suffrage of the prætorians, and secure with their assistance the homage of the senate. Titus indeed had already declared that he regarded Domitian as the partner of his power, and had continued, even under the greatest provocation, to point to him as his legitimate successor. It was in vain, however, that the gentle emperor had sought the love and gratitude of his unworthy brother. Domitian scowled upon him with ill-disguised impatience for his decease, and when, at last, he obtained possession of the throne, declared with brutal exultation that he

[1] I presume this was in fact the same vigorous cold-water treatment which had saved Augustus and killed Marcellus.

had himself bestowed it upon his father and brother, and now received back his own gift from them. He discharged the formal duty of pronouncing the funereal oration, and soliciting the consecration of Titus; but his praises were cold or insidious, and the people were little satisfied with the meed of honour assigned to their favourite.[1]

His claims superior to those of the daughter of Titus, or of her husband.

Titus left, as we have seen, no male descendant, and the daughter of a Roman house could not take the inheritance of her father, which was in law the property of the family, and went along with the liability to maintain the family rights, and perform the proper functions of a citizen. To accept the office of princeps or imperator, of censor or pontiff, was not more impossible for Julia than to assume the chiefship of a patrician house. Domitian, the deceased's brother, was the apparent heir to the estate, and therewith presumptive heir, according to the notions of the time, to the political functions with which the deceased had been invested. It might require indeed a vote of the senate and a lex curiata to confer the empire formally upon him; but subject to this formality, his claim might be considered as sufficiently established. The natural feelings of paternity, however, were beginning to assert themselves against the long descended rules of law and primitive usage. Titus was anxious for his daughter's happiness and greatness. With his Asiatic training, he had discarded, no doubt, many of his ancestral prejudices, and the son of the plain Sabine burgher had felt no scruple in proposing to unite his daughter in marriage with his own brother. Such unions, as we have seen, had been legitimized by Claudius, but they had not been sanctioned by public

[1] Comp. Suet. *Domit.* 2.: "Defunctum nullo præterquam consecrationis honore dignatus, sæpe etiam carpsit obliquis orationibus et edictis." Dion, lxvii. 2.: *πάντα τὰ ἐναντιώτατα ὧν ἐβούλετο σκηπτόμενος.*

opinion. By the genuine Roman they were still reputed foreign, oriental, abominable. Domitian rejected the proposal. True, he might feel that his claim was too strong to require any subsidiary support: true, he was enamoured of the wife of a senator whom he required to repudiate her husband in order to contract nuptials with himself.[1] Nevertheless, a purist as he was by early breeding, and a reformer as he afterwards proved himself, and uncontaminated by contact with the licentious East, Domitian shrank perhaps with genuine repugnance from the questionable arrangement proposed to him. Julia, thus repulsed, was united to her father's first cousin, Flavius Sabinus, and this man might feel perhaps aggrieved that the splendid inheritance of the Cæsars should pass out of the line of natural descent, or, that he should not be himself adopted by his father-in-law. Hence the jealousy with which, as we shall see, Domitian continued to regard him; and hence, perhaps, the intrigue which the emperor carried on, even before his accession, according at least to common rumour, with the niece whom he had refused in marriage, but whom he might craftily seek to attach to himself by the tie of an irregular connexion.[2]

Unjust disparagement of Domitian's early education.

The personal history of Domitian indeed has been made the sport of common fame, and we need hardly trouble ourselves to analyse it. The anecdotes of the historians are put together with little judgment or consistency. Suetonius, for instance, assures us explicitly that the

[1] This was Domitia, daughter of Corbulo, and wife of Ælius Lamia. Suet. *Domit.* 22.; Dion, lxvi. 3. Domitian had seduced her in the year of his administration with Mucianus, when he was himself but nineteen years of age, and had soon afterwards married her. In the year 826 (his second consulship, Suet. *Domit.* 3.; Clinton, *Fast. Rom.*) she bore him a son who died in infancy. Domitian continued to live with her, with one interruption, until his death.

[2] This connexion began, apparently, as soon as Julia was betrothed, and before she was married to Sabinus. Suet. *Domit.* 22.: "Fratris

advantages of his distinguished parentage, born, as he was, in the very year of his father's consulship, were wholly lost to him, and while Titus enjoyed a liberal education, Domitian was entirely neglected in consequence of the obscurity and indigence into which Vespasian subsequently fell.[1] While Titus found honourable employment in the camp and rose to the highest commands, his brother, we are told, was suffered to grow up uncared for, in a mean corner of the city, and in such wretched poverty as to be driven to the vilest degradation for patronage or support. But even the same writer's casual remark, that the young man, when fleeing from the burning Capitol, took refuge in the house of a *fellow student*, shows that this account is not to be lightly credited. Nor is the reputation he subsequently attained for literary accomplishments, however much it may have been enhanced by interested flatterers, consistent with such abject beginnings. Even the patronage he pretended at least to extend to letters, of which more will be said hereafter, seems to evince an appreciation of literary adulation seldom found in the grossly rude and ignorant. His mother indeed died in his childhood, and his father may have been frequently absent or engaged; but it is not likely that the nephew of a personage so distinguished as Sabinus would be left in utter destitution. Domitian, we may presume, received and profited by the usual instruction in grammar, rhetoric and philosophy. Possibly he enjoyed, from the Sabine traditions of his house, a simpler and severer training than usually fell to the lot of children of his rank. When in later life he replaced the humble tenement in which he first saw the light,

filiam adhuc virginem, oblatam in matrimonium sibi, quum devinctus Domitiæ nuptiis pertinacissime recusasset, non multo post alii collocatam, corrupit ultro, et quidem vivo adhuc Tito."

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 1. Domitian was born in the year of his father's first consulship, A. U. 804 (Oct. 24.), and was therefore ten years younger than Titus.

with a temple to the Flavian family, we may trace, perhaps, the act not to superstitious feelings only but to an antique sentiment of pious affection.[1]

Comparison between Titus and Domitian.

Our authorities delight in representing the younger son of Vespasian as a striking contrast to the elder, the darling of the Roman people. Yet there was at least a strong family resemblance between them. Both were constitutionally impulsive and irritable; both took with feminine facility the varnish of patrician refinement; both were naturally voluptuous and sensual, and surrendered themselves to the charms of Circe and the Sirens. Had Titus been left at Rome in his tender years, exposed to every temptation, and denied the conduct of affairs and the discipline of active life, these propensities would have attained the same ascendancy over him which appeared so fatally in Domitian. But whether from the misfortune of his breeding, or from his natural deficiencies, the character of the younger brother presents, on the whole, but a pale reflection of that of the elder. That which is generosity in the one becomes mere physical sensibility in the other. Titus pledged himself to shed no Roman blood during his principate; Domitian proposed to forbid the sacrifice of oxen.[2] The one could be cruel from policy or necessity, the other from mere puerile impatience. Titus wasted Judea with fire and sword; Domitian persecuted the flies,

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 1. Martial, ix. 21.:

> "Hic steterat veneranda domus, quæ præstitit orbi
> Quod Rhodus, astrifero quod pia Creta polo."

The birthplace of Domitian, and consequently the site of the temple of the Flavian family, was at a place called the Malum Punicum in the Sixth Region, denominated Alta Semita, which included the Quirinal and some of the densest parts of the Servian city. This temple is not to be confounded with that of Vespasian in the Forum.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 9.: "Inter initia usque adeo ab omni cæde abhorruit, ut absente adhuc patre, recordatus Virgilii versum, *Impia quam cæsis gens est epulata juvencis*, edicere destinarit ne boves immolarentur."

and made a solitude of his chamber[1] The deportment of the elder brother was sociable and kindly, and if he enjoyed with too keen a zest the pleasures of his station, he at least shared them genially with his companions. Domitian is described as morose and solitary, even in his relaxations. He gave, indeed, the banquets prescribed by custom; but they were joyless and hurried, irksome both to the host and to his guests.[2] Titus, again, devoted himself nobly to sustain his father's interests, while he shared his fame; but Domitian, with equal ambition, was meanly jealous of his brother's reputation, and anxious to snatch laurels in which his kinsmen should have no part. Frustrated in his endeavours to emulate their military glory, he might pretend to occupy himself in arts and letters; but neither the pleasure of study, nor the praise of flatterers, could really soothe his wounded vanity; he intrigued against them living, and detracted from their merits when dead.

Prosecution of the conquest of Britain.

But the stately march of the Roman princes has too long occupied the stage and engrossed our whole attention. A new scene of war and military glory may here be interpolated in the imperial drama, and remind us of the aggressive attitude which in its vigorous old age the empire still retained in the face of opposing barbarism. The Britannic legions had been little moved by the passion of the civil wars. With Galba, at least, and with

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 3.: "Nec quicquam amplius quam muscas captare, ac stylo præacuto configere." When it was asked, "Was any one with Domitian?" "Not even a fly," answered the witty Crispus ("Crispi jucunda senectus:" Juv. iv. 81.). Comp. Dion, lxvi. 9.; Victor. *Epit.* 11.; *Cæs.* 11. Comp. Plin. *Paneg.* 48.: "Non adire quisquam non alloqui audebat, tenebras semper secretumque captantem, nec unquam ex solitudine sua prodeuntem, nisi ut solitudinem faceret."

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 21.: "Lavabat de die prandebatque ad satietatem," *i. e.* his solitary morning meal was ample; but, "convivabatur," he supped "frequenter et large, sed pæne raptim: certe non ultra solis occasum; nec postea comissabatur."

Otho, they had no personal connexion; they were too far removed from the centre of affairs to covet the spoils of Rome and Italy; and, above all, their hands and minds were fully occupied with the toils and dangers immediately before them.[1] But the accession of a great military chief to power had roused the pride of the soldiers, and given a sudden impetus to the career of conquest. Vespasian might regard with personal interest the complete reduction of Britain, where he had gained his own earliest distinctions. The Fourteenth legion, which had followed Vitellius to Bedriacum, had been sent back, flushed with victory and chafed with disappointment, to its quarters in the island, and its discontent could only be allayed by the excitement of active service.

Successive prefects: Petronius Turpilianus, A. D. 61, Trebellius Maximus, A. D. 65.

But since the removal of Suetonius Paulinus, the prefects of the British province had been directed to keep the sword, if possible, in the scabbard. Petronius Turpilianus had been satisfied with restoring the disturbed districts to submission. Trebellius Maximus had mitigated the severity of the proconsular government, but at the same time had relaxed the discipline of the legions. The soldiers pretended that he was immersed in the care of amassing a fortune, and the Twentieth legion, disdaining his control, had broken out in mutiny, at the instigation of its chief, and driven him out of the island.[2] Trebellius had repaired to Rome, where Vitellius was clutching at the purple; but the tottering emperor could give him no support. The soldiers rallied together for their own security, and the peace of the province did not suffer by the paralysis of the capital. On the restoration

[1] Tac. *Hist.* i. 9.: "In Britannico exercitu nihil irarum. Non sane aliæ legiones, per omnes bellorum civilium motus, innocentius egerunt: seu, quia procul et Oceano divisæ; seu crebris expeditionibus doctæ hostem potius odisse."

[2] Tac. *Ann.* xiv. 39.; *Hist.* i. 60., ii. 65.; *Agric.* 16.

of authority at Rome, Vettius Bolanus was sent to take the command, and their recent excesses seem to have been prudently overlooked. With equal prudence the mutinous legion had declared itself for Vespasian, and the Second, which he had himself formerly commanded, naturally sided with him.[1] Tacitus affirms that the new governor was indolent though not seditious; but the depression of one chief is an easy artifice for exalting a successor, and I am tempted in this instance to weigh the testimony of a poet against that of an historian.[2] The praises of Statius, however overstrained, seem at least to indicate that Bolanus placed himself at the head of his moveable columns, laid out his camps, erected his tribunals, fought battles, gained victories, and dedicated to the gods of Rome the spoils of vanquished enemies.[3]

Tacitus might have remembered that it was impossible to undertake any extensive operations while the loyalty of the legions was yet unassured, and while, from the want of reinforcements and the cessation of the ordinary levies, their numbers were probably incomplete. C. Julius Agricola, a brave and able officer, but as yet unknown to fame, was placed at the head of the mutinous Twentieth, the head-quarters of which were at Deva, whence it kept in check the Brigantes of Yorkshire on the one hand, and the Ordovices of North Wales on the other.[4] The

[1] Tac. *Agric.* 16.; *Hist.* i. 60.

[2] Tac. *Agric.* 8.: "Præerat tunc Britanniæ Vettius Bolanus, placidius quam feroci provincia dignum est." Comp. 16.

[3] Statius, *Sylv.* v. 2. 144. foll.:

> "Hic suetus dare jura parens; hoc cespite turmas
> Affari: nitidas speculas castellaque longe
> Aspicis? ille dedit, cinxitque hæc mœnia fossa."

[4] Agricola belonged to the colony of Forum Julii in the Narbonensis. He was doubly devoted to the defence of the new Flavian dynasty, his father having been sacrificed to the tyranny of Caius Cæsar, and his mother slain by marauders from the fleet of Otho. *Agric.* 4. 7.

recovery of this corps to the interests of Vespasian secured the position of the Romans in Britain. Petilius Cerialis, the next proconsul, was enabled to carry on offensive operations, and Julius Frontinus, who followed him, chastised and pacified the revolted Silures. The services of Agricola were rewarded by promotion to the government of Aquitania, from whence, in less than three years, he was summoned to Rome, and elevated to the consulship. Vespasian was anxious to maintain and possibly to extend his possessions in Britain, and he chose this distinguished chief as the best instrument for controlling the legions and pacifying the natives.[1]

Petilius Cerialis, A. D. 71.

Julius Frontinus, A. D. 75.

C. Julius Agricola, consul, A. D. 77; proconsul in Britain, A. D. 78, A. U. 831.

In the palmy days of Rome the same man was both warrior and statesman: the consul led the Fathers in the senate-house and their sons on the battlefield; but with the change of manners a new theory now prevailed, that the profession of arms unfits men for political affairs. *Many think*, says Tacitus, *that the military character lacks subtlety and tact. Camps are governed by strong will and prompt action; and give no play to the shrewdness which sways the forum.*[2] But Agricola, to follow the portraiture of his son-in-law, disproved this theory, or served to confirm it by one notable exception. His administration in peace was just and temperate, and showed that he could guide the men of the gown as well as he could command the men of the sword. His first care was to gain the confidence of the provincials, and engage them to embrace the arts and manners

Agricola's conduct as governor, and first and second campaigns, A. D. 78, 79, A. U. 831, 832.

[1] Tac. *Agric.* 8, 9. During his consulship (A. U. 830), and with this greater preferment full in view, Agricola betrothed his daughter to Tacitus, who appreciated the value of a choice which seemed to open to him the highest honours.

[2] Tac. *Agric.* 9.: "Credunt plerique militaribus ingeniis subtilitatem deesse; quia castrensis jurisdictio secura et obtusior, ac plura manu agens, calliditatem fori non exerceat."

of their conquerors. He proposed the dress and language of Rome for their adoption, and taught them, with more success than any of his predecessors, to admire and cultivate the luxuries of southern civilization. Meanwhile the flower of their youth was drafted off to recruit the forces of the empire in distant regions, and battalions from Gaul and Spain, from Thrace and Africa, brought over to furnish auxiliaries to the legions in Britain, and maintain by their side the quarrels of the empire. Even in his first summer, when he had been but a few months in the island, and when none even of his own officers expected active service, Agricola led his forces into the country of the Ordovices, in whose mountain passes the war of independence still lingered, drove the Britons across the Menai Straits, and pursued them into Anglesey, as Suetonius had done before him, by boldly crossing the boiling current in the face of the enemy. Another summer saw him advance northward into the territory of the Brigantes, and complete the organization of the district, lately reduced, between the Humber and Tyne. Struck perhaps with the natural defences of the line from the Tyne to the Solway, where the island seems to have been broken, as it were, in the middle and soldered unevenly together, he drew a chain of forts from sea to sea, to protect the reclaimed subjects of the Southern valleys from the untamed barbarians who roamed the Cheviots and the Pentlands.[1]

Agricola establishes himself on the line of the Tyne and Solway.

To penetrate the stormy wilds of Caledonia, and track to their fastnesses the hordes of savages, the Ottadini, Horestii and Mæatæ, who flitted among them, was an adventure which promised no plunder and little glory. The

[1] Tac. *Agric.* 18–20. The first and second campaigns of Agricola occupied the summer of 831, 832. The winters were employed—"saluberrimis consiliis"—in bending the minds of the Britons to the arts of peace.

legions of Rome, with their expensive equipments, could not hope even to support themselves on the bleak mountain sides, unclaimed by men and abandoned by nature. His camps on the Tyne and Irthing were the magazines from which Agricola's supplies must wholly be drawn; the ordinary term of a provincial prefecture was inadequate to a long, a distant, and an aimless adventure. But Vespasian had yielded to the ardour of his favourite lieutenant: ample means were furnished, and ample time was allowed. In the third year of his command, Agricola pushed forward along the eastern coast, and making good with roads and fortresses every inch of his progress, reached, as I imagine, the Firth of Forth.[1] He had quitted the waist and had here reached the neck of Britain, the point where the two seas are divided by an isthmus scarcely thirty miles in breadth. Here he repeated the operations of the preceding winter, planting his camps and stations from hill to hill, and securing a new belt of territory, ninety miles across, for Roman occupation. The natives, scared at his presence and fleeing before him, were thus thrust, in the language of Tacitus, as it were into another island. For a moment the empire seemed to have found its northern limit. Agricola rested through the next summer, occupied in the organization of his conquests, and employed his fifth year also in strengthening his position between the two isthmuses, and reducing

Reaches the isthmus between the Forth and Clyde.

[1] Tac. *Agric.* 22.: "Tertius expeditionum annus (833) novas gentes aperuit, vastatis usque ad *Tanaum*, æstuario nomen est, nationibus." This is the true reading of the MSS. for which *Taum* (the Tay) was substituted by Putcolanus from a marginal gloss. I cannot suppose that Agricola crossed the Firth of Forth in this campaign. Wex, in his edition of the *Agricola*, suggests that *Tanaus* is the North Tyne, which falls into the Firth near Dunbar. Tan, as is well-known, is a common Celtic appellative for running water, and may possibly be applied to the estuary itself, although Bodotria is the name specifically assigned to the river Forth, if not to the Firth called after it.

the furthest corners of the province, whence the existence of a new realm was betrayed to him. The grassy plains of teeming Hibernia offered a fairer prey than the gray mountains which frowned upon his fresh entrenchments, and all their wealth, he was assured, might be secured by the valour of a single legion. But other counsels prevailed; Agricola turned from the Mull of Galloway, and Ireland, so the fates ordained, was left to her fogs and her feuds for eleven more centuries.[1]

Comes in sight of Ireland from the Mull of Galloway.

The Caledonians had resumed their courage during the two years' inaction of the invading legions. In the year 836, the sixth of his protracted command, Agricola, understanding that they were collecting their forces to make a combined attack upon his lines, determined to surprise them by a rapid incursion into the regions beyond the Forth. The necessities of his own armament had required the attendance of a naval force, and when he advanced along the coasts of Fife, he drew his most certain supplies from the vessels which moved parallel to his flank. The rude natives might be amazed at the movements of these marine monsters; nevertheless, they were not dismayed, but thrusting themselves between his advancing columns and the fortifications in the rear, threatened, if they could not arrest his progress, at least to cut off his retreat. Agricola marshalled his forces in three brigades, to meet them at various points. The Ninth legion, the same which had been cut up by Boadicea, was assailed in its camp, and only saved by the vigour of the division led by the general in person. The object of the campaign was gained perhaps by the discovery of a tract of fertile plains, stretching along the coast for many miles, and the invaders

Agricola penetrates beyond the Forth. A. D. 83. A. U. 837.

[1] Tac. *Agric.* 22-24., A. U. 834, 835.

might return within their lines for the winter, with the expectation of fixing themselves firmly beyond them in the ensuing summer.[1]

Site of the great battle with Galgacus. A. D. 84. A. U. 837.

Roused to redoubled exertions by the assurance that the flying enemy had now but little room for retreat, surprised and encouraged by the attractive character of the lowlands, which continued still to border the eastern sea, the Romans pushed forward in a seventh campaign, and at last brought the Caledonians to bay on the battlefield. The site of the famous struggle, which, described in the vigorous narrative of Tacitus, has invested with equal glory the names of both Agricola and Galgacus, has not been clearly determined. The opinion popularly received is unusually moderate. The imposing remains of Roman castrametation at Ardoch in Strathallan, have drawn the attention of the native antiquaries, who are generally content to suppose that the invaders did not actually penetrate more than ten miles beyond Stirling.[2] To me this spot seems to lie too far inland, if we may suppose at least that the legions depended on their fleet for almost all their supplies. I should presume also, that in this, their second campaign beyond the Forth, they pushed their successes considerably further northward. The fields of Fife and Angus are seamed with numerous vestiges of Roman entrenchments, and though these may in fact be the work of a later generation of invaders, and though, as far as I can discover, there is nothing in the character of the en-

[1] Tac. *Agric.* 25–27.

[2] The great camp at Ardoch would contain about 30,000 men, according to the Polybian arrangement; but if Agricola adopted the system which prevailed certainly under Trajan, and which was probably in use some generations earlier, this camp would accommodate fully 67,000, and this is a much larger number than his force can have reached. Hence it may be suspected that this camp belongs to the time of Severus, who is said to have penetrated into Caledonia with a much larger army. See Roy, *Military Antiq.* p. 190.; who, however, supposes Agricola to use the Polybian castrametation.

trenchments themselves to fix them to the first rather than to the second or third century, I am still inclined, on the whole, to place the scene in question in the neighbourhood of Forfar or Brechin.[1]

Battle of the Grampians. A. D. 84. A. U. 837.

The speeches put into the mouths of the rival chiefs are among the finest gems of Tacitean eloquence, and express the contrast, ever present to the philosophic historian's mind, between the civilized world and the barbarian, their respective hopes, fears, claims and destinies. Whether or not he had enjoyed, as some have supposed, an opportunity of studying this contrast on the spot, during an early residence on the Germanic frontier, his instinct seems, at least, to have discovered in it the germ of an impending revolution in the fortunes of his own countrymen.[2] Nor is the battle-piece which follows, and fitly crowns the narrative of his hero's military exploits, less celebrated for its vigour and vividness. To us it is chiefly interesting for the glimpse it reveals of Roman tactics at this period. Agricola had with him probably three Roman legions; but when menaced by the full force of the enemy, he prepares to meet the attack with his auxiliary cohorts of eight thousand men in the centre, and his auxiliary squadrons of cavalry, numbering three thousand on the flanks. The legions, the flower of the whole army, are drawn up before the camp, far in the rear; nor, when pressed by his own officers to employ them in the field, will he consent to expose one man of

[1] Tacitus only says, "Ad montem *Grampium* pervenit." Even the word *Grampius*, from which the modern geographical name for the frontier ridge of the eastern highlands has been adopted, seems to be an error. The best MSS. are said to give *Graupius*. Wex, on *Agric.* 29., and Proleg. p. 194.

[2] Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* vii. 16, mentions a Cornelius Tacitus, a Roman knight, as procurator of Gallia Belgica, who has been vainly surmised to be the historian himself. This, however, is inconsistent with the dates. It is possible, however, that the procurator may have been the historian's father, and that our Tacitus may have resided as a child in the province.

this powerful reserve to the onset of the barbarians. All the loss and danger must fall upon the Batavians, the Usipians, the Gauls and Spaniards; but when the day is won by the blood of her subjects, it is Rome that reaps the profit, and the legions of Rome that reap the glory, and acquire the titles of *Rapacious* and *Invincible*, *Apollinean* and *Minervian*.

A. D. 84. A. U. 837.

This battle closed Agricola's seventh campaign.[1] The short summer was passed, and no further progress could be made by land. But the complete reduction of Caledonia was still present to his view, and he meditated fresh plans of conquest from behind his entrenchments on the Forth and Clyde. Meanwhile, he directed the fleet which had attended him to advance northward along the coast from headland to headland, and carry the terror of the Roman name among the remotest tribes, while it procured him the information he required about the nature and resources of the country. The Roman mariners now for the first time entered the Pentland Firth, examined the Orkney islands, and gained perhaps a glimpse of the Shetlands. They ascertained the point at which Britain terminates northward, and possibly noted the great deflection of the coast southward from Cape Wrath. Having effected the object of the expedition, they returned, as I cannot doubt, still creeping timidly, as was their wont, from headland to headland, and having hugged the eastern coast from Caithness to the Firth of Forth, were finally drawn up for the winter on the beach from which they

Pretended circumnavigation of Britain.

[1] The campaigns of Agricola extend from 78 (U.C. 831) to 84 (U.C. 837) inclusive. The battle with Galgacus was fought in the seventh year. But "*octavus* annus est," says Agricola in his speech. Some critics suspect an error of VIII. for VII. I hardly think Tacitus would have used so weak an exordium as "Septimus annus est." But though it was Agricola's seventh, it might be called the eighth campaign of his army; for in the year preceding his arrival, Julius Frontinus had led an expedition against the Silures. *Agric.* 17.

had been launched at the commencement of the season.[1]

The best authorities, Cæsar and Diodorus, Pliny and Mela, had long before asserted the insular character of Britain; but the Romans, up to this time, had had a very imperfect conception of its size and figure, and when the legions, advancing northwards, season after season, saw the mountain crests of Caledonia still rising before them, and the expected limits of the island still constantly receding, they might feel some distrust of their geographical information,

[1] The account I have ventured to give of this remarkable expedition requires some justification. Tacitus says (*Agric.* 38.), "Præfecto classis circumvehi Britanniam præcepit . . . . . et simul classis secunda tempestate ac fama Trutulensem portum tenuit, unde, proximo latere Britanniæ lecto omni, redierat." The last clause is crabbed and perhaps corrupt. Dion (lxvi. 20.) supposes the fleet to have circumnavigated the whole island, and such has been the usual interpretation of modern critics, which they confirm by reference to *Agric.* 10. and 28. I am countenanced by Mannert in rejecting this interpretation. In c. 10., Tacitus, referring by anticipation to this voyage, says, speaking of the projecting part of Britain, which is called distinctively Caledonian: "Hanc oram novissimi maris tunc primum Romana classis circumvecta insulam esse Britanniam affirmavit;" that is, confirmed the inference previously drawn from the character of the southern district. It is unnecessary, therefore, to suppose that the fleet completed the circumnavigation of the whole island on this occasion. Again, in c. 28., our author relates the incident of certain Usipians in the service of Agricola seizing on some ships by which, "circumvecti Britanniam," they were at last wafted to the coast of Friesland. Here the circumstances cannot reasonably admit of the common explanation. "Circumvehi," however, does not necessarily mean *to be carried round*; but may signify simply *to make a sweep*, or to be wafted *from point to point*. Thus, Virgil says: "Circum pictis vehitur sua rura phaselis." See several other instances in Forcellini under "circumveho, circumvecto." The Usipians, as I understand it, ran down the east coast from the Forth, till they came opposite to Friesland. The "portus Trutulensis" is not mentioned elsewhere. The critics commonly suppose it to be a false reading for "Rutupensis." But the fleet which attended upon Agricola must have had its winter haven in the north, and nowhere so probably as in the Firth of Forth. The expedition, then, according to my view, sailed from the Forth to Cape Wrath, or thereabouts, and returned the same way that it went, having skirted *all the nearest*, i.e. the east coast of Caledonia.

and require a more certain assurance of the fact known hitherto only by hearsay. The demonstration thus obtained was itself regarded as a triumphant achievement, and Agricola was celebrated by his countrymen as an explorer as well as a conqueror. But before the fleet had returned to its winter station, the decree had gone forth by which his career of conquest and discovery was to be arrested, and the great proconsul was himself, in obedience to his letters of recall, far advanced on the road to Italy. Directed to transfer his authority to the successor assigned to him, he obeyed without hesitation; for Agricola knew how to obey as well as to command.[1] Domitian, indeed, according to a popular rumour, was apprehensive lest his victorious lieutenant, at the head of a province which respected, and an army which idolized him, should refuse to surrender his power, and challenge his imperator to a conflict. He sent a freedman to him, with the offer of the government of Syria; charging him at the same time not to deliver it if Agricola should have already relinquished his post unbribed. The envoy encountered the returning general in mid-channel, kept the letter under his skirt, and restored it unopened to his master.[2]

Recall of Agricola, A. D. 84. A. U. 837.

The bitter charges Tacitus makes against Domitian, the envy and dissimulation he imputes to him in the matter of Agricola's recall, are such as from the tyrant's known character we may readily believe. Yet a better and abler man than the degenerate son of Vespasian might now have hastened, not from jealousy, but with a wise discretion, to bring the British campaigns to a close. It was hardly consistent with prudent policy, nor

Jealousy of Agricola imputed to Domitian.

[1] Tac. *Agric.* 8.: "Virtute in obsequendo . . . extra invidiam, nec extra gloriam erat."

[2] Tac. *Agric.* 40.: "Credidere plerique . . . sive verum istud, sive ex ingenio principis fictum ac compositum est."

would it have been permitted in the sounder ages of the Republic, any more than of the Empire, that the governor of a distant dependency should remain for many years in command of all its resources, with the entire disposal of its places and emoluments, with a great public faction growing around him, and threatening to force him into a hostile attitude. No proconsul since Cæsar had waged seven years of warfare in any province, and the memory of Cæsar's proconsulate was not reassuring either to the senate or the emperor.[1] Germanicus had been recalled after three campaigns; the hand of Corbulo had been held from year to year suspended. Nor were the results, calmly considered, worth the hazard. The victories of Agricola were barren; his conquests were merely disappointments. Never before were such efforts made for so trifling an object. The reduction of the whole of Caledonia would hardly have brought one gold piece into the imperial treasury. But the expense was enormous. Britain must have been exhausted by the requisitions imposed upon her for the supply of men and munitions; her tribute must have run low; her commerce must have languished; the progress of Roman arts and manners must have been arrested within her borders. The long career which had been already vouchsafed to Agricola was owing, perhaps, to the premature death of his first patron Vespasian, the easy indolence of Titus, and the timidity of Domitian on his first accession to a position which he had earned by no merits of his own. But in the third year of his reign, the emperor, as we shall see, had conducted a campaign in person, and Rome acquiesced in his claim to a victory. Tacitus

[1] Tiberius, indeed, could say, *Ann.* ii. 26.: "Se novies a divo Augusto in Germaniam missum:" but these missions were not consecutive, and some of them had been bloodless: "plura consilio quam vi perfecisse." Forcible in the mouth of Tiberius, the arguments here advanced would be still more forcible in that of Domitian.

affirms indeed that the consciousness of his own failure in arms made him the more jealous of a genuine hero.[1] To me it seems more probable that the conviction of his own prowess first gave him courage to check the aspiring chief, whom he naturally apprehended as a rival. In this, however, Domitian was unjust to his lieutenant. Agricola yielded with dignified submission. He shrank from the applause which the people would have lavished upon him; he accepted indeed, respectfully, the triumphal ornaments proffered by his master, but he declined all further advancement or employment, and baffled the malice of his enemies by the studied moderation of his life and language in the city.[2] For nine years he continued to enjoy this prudent retirement, blessed in the happiness of a daughter married to the high-minded Tacitus, whose ardent aspirations for an impracticable liberty he controlled by the wisdom of his counsels and the living force of his example.[3]

[1] Tac. *Agric.* 39.: "Inerat conscientia derisui fuisse nuper falsum e Germania triumphum, emptis per commercia quorum habitus et crines in captivorum speciem formarentur." The reader will observe the repetition of previous insinuations against the genuineness of the spoils of Caligula. I am compelled to express some doubt of the statement that there was any such triumph at all at this time. Eusebius in his Chronicle records one occasion of triumph only under Domitian (ad ann. 91): "Domitianus de Dacis et Germanis triumphavit." Suetonius says (c. 6.): "De Chattis Dacisque duplicem triumphum egit;" still referring to a single occasion, though the double solemnity may have occupied two consecutive days. The Dacian triumph, which undoubtedly took place, as we shall see, A.D. 91, is alone referred to by Dion, and there is no trace of an earlier one in the poets Martial and Statius. Suetonius, however, must be in error when he says (c. 13.): "Post duos triumphos Germanici nomine assumpto;" for the title Germanicus appears on the coins of Domitian from the year 84 downwards. Eckhel, vi. 378. Tacitus seems to have been misled by the assumption of this title after the campaign of 84.

[2] Tac. *Agric.* 40.: "Cultu modicus, sermone facilis, uno atque altero amicorum comitatus."

[3] Tac. *Agric.* 42.: "Non contumacia, neque inani jactatione libertatis, famam fatumque provocabat." Compare Corbulo (Dubois du Guehan, *Tacite et son Siècle*, ii. 387.). The merit of Agricola appears

Attitude of the German tribes towards Rome.

The mutual relations of the barbarian hordes beyond the Rhine and Danube, which began from the second century to disturb the pride, to shake the power, and at last to threaten the existence of the empire, hardly yet require the attention of the reader of Roman history. At present, while the great peril was concealed, and no anxiety awakened, we may look from the Roman point of view on the Germans and Dacians, whose hostility caused as yet only transient and occasional annoyance. Claudius indeed, on the recall of Corbulo, had drawn within the Rhine the outposts of the Germanian province. Conquest was forbidden, and the eyes of the Romans were averted from the prospect of future aggrandisement in that quarter. If the internal dissensions of the natives still operated for the advancement of Roman interests among them, the government assiduously disclaimed all intention of profiting thereby. It received petitions, heard complaints, recommended the redress of wrongs and grievances, and even arbitrated between rival aspirants to power in their respective communities, but it effectually checked the warlike ardour of its lieutenants, the most restless and dangerous class of its subjects, by lavishing the triumphal ornaments, the last object of military ambition, on the chiefs who refrained from war, and directed their energies to works of peace and measures of public security. To build a road or dig a canal might entitle the Germanian prefect to the favour and honours formerly reserved for a brilliant foray or a gallant victory.[1] It is true that the inactivity thus impressed on the command of the frontier armies encouraged the bar-

very strongly on comparing him with Corbulo, who could not keep within the limits prescribed to the subject either of a monarchy or a republic. Corbulo might have become another Sulla or Marius.

[1] Tac. *Ann.* xi. 18–20.

barians to insults and even outrages; but their hasty and inconsiderate attacks were easily baffled; their delinquent chiefs, instead of being punished by arms, were invited to carry their complaints to Rome, and there, surrounded by all the glories of imperial splendour, learnt to estimate the power of the conquering race, and to sigh for its luxuries. When the Frisian envoys beheld in the theatre the *Allies of the Roman people* seated next to the Consuls and Senators, they turned away from the games and shows in which they took little interest, but exclaimed that among the spectators of the games there were no friends more devoted to Rome than the Germans, and insisted on receiving a place among the most favoured nations.[1]

Three groups of barbarians on the northern frontier, on the Rhine, the Danube, and the Ister.

The northern frontier of the empire was skirted by three groups of barbarians: on the Rhine by the tribes of Lower Germany, from the Frisii, on the coast, to the Chatti, in Nassau and Baden, some of which, such as the Cherusci and others, were well disposed to Rome, while the Chatti made themselves obnoxious by the eagerness with which they seized every safe opportunity of aggression. On the Danubius, or Upper Danube, the Marcomanni, formerly the subjects of Maroboduus, still retained a strong and settled polity, and were controlled by a chief named Vannius, who was able to maintain a durable peace with Rome. On the Ister, or Lower Danube, we hear of the restless hostility of the Mœsians, a name which will soon give way to that of the more famous and more formidable Dacians. During the insurrection of Civilis, the Chatti had made an inroad into the Roman province, and attempted to seize Moguntiacum. At the same period Mucianus, while

[1] Tac. *Ann.* xiii. 14.

advancing towards Italy, had been compelled to detach a force to repel an incursion of the Mœsians into Thrace. Domitian had flown to defend the Rhine, but the foe had already retreated, and it was not thought necessary to pursue them. Eager to distinguish himself as a warrior, he had besought his father to intrust him with another command on the frontiers; but the prudent Vespasian had maintained the tranquil policy of Claudius, and the young prince was doomed to remain still unlaurelled. Upon his accession to power his vanity was free to indulge itself. In the year 84 he placed himself at the head of the forces on the Rhine, and conducted an expedition against the Chatti. It was a mere summer promenade, in which the enemy resorted to their old tactics of retreat, and it is probable that no great engagement took place. Yet the contempt with which the campaign is treated by some of our authorities seems hardly justified. One military writer, attached perhaps to the emperor's suite, and though a courtier by position, a man who at least had good means of knowing the circumstances, speaks of it with warm but not overweening applause. The Germans were indeed always ready to accede to moderate demands of slaves or tribute exacted from them as the price of withdrawal, and the treaty concluded with the Chatti by Domitian is no proof of a brilliant success. But the weight of the emperor's sword is rather to be traced in the tranquillity which continued to reign in this quarter, and in the Romanized population spread throughout the contiguous districts, which enabled Trajan, a few years later, to annex them permanently to the empire.[1]

Domitian leads an expedition against the Chatti.

A. D. 84. A. U. 837.

[1] For the expedition against the Chatti, see Suet. *Domit.* 6.; Dion, lxvii. 4. These writers treat it with the utmost contempt. On the other hand comp. Frontinus, *Stratagem.* i. 1. 8., ii. 11. 7.; Stat. *Sylv.* i. 4. 89., iii. 3. 168.: "Victis parcentia fœdera Chattis."

Domitian hastened back to Rome, and no doubt vaunted his prowess to the utmost. The people applauded; the soldiers, gratified with an addition to their pay, shouted behind him as he entered the city, and shook their formidable weapons; the poets chanted their elaborate compliments; here and there only a whisper or a placard hinted that the victory was a lie, the show an imposture, the captives bought or borrowed for the occasion.[1] Domitian wanted magnanimity to despise these cavils, even if he knew them to be undeserved. But he now felt himself strong in the favour of the army, which he had led to the Capitol, and he could venture to recall the brave lieutenant whose exploits transcended his own. He had gained a victory over Agricola and his other captains, worth many victories over the enemies of Rome. He assumed himself the surname of Germanicus; he imposed this designation upon the month of September; but these empty titles added little to the complacency with which he felt that he was now the Chief of his own armies, now an emperor indeed.[2]

Domitian claims a victory, and assumes the name of Germanicus.

[1] See a preceding note on the triumph erroneously, as it would seem, ascribed to Domitian by Tacitus. The solemn entry of the emperor into Rome, after a victorious expedition, might bear the appearance, and perhaps attain, in loose language, the name of a triumph, without having any legitimate claim to it. Pliny refers to a later triumph over the Dacians (see below) when he contrasts with it the genuine honours of Trajan: "Accipiet aliquando Capitolium non mimicos currus, nec falsa simulacra victoriæ;" see *Panegyr.* 16. 17. The imputation of fictitious trophies seems to have been as common as it was easy.

[2] Martial, ix. 2.:

> "Dum Janus hiemes, Domitianus auctumnos,
> Augustus annis commodabit æstates:
> Dum grande famuli nomen asseret Rheni
> Germanicarum magna lux Calendarum."

The assumption of this title was already known on the Nile in December, as appears from an inscription scratched on the statue of Memnon: "Sextus Licinius Pudens legionis xxii. xi. kal. Januarias anno IIII. D(omini) N(ostri) Domitiani Cæsaris Aug. Germanici

The senate next decreed that Domitian should be perpetual censor, and encouraged him to assume the consulship year after year successively. He had now repaired the damage inflicted on the Capitol by the recent fire, and completed the restoration of the most august of the Roman temples. But the treasures of Vespasian had already melted away in the hands of the liberal Titus; costly wars and barren triumphs had drained perhaps to the last sesterce the coffers of the empire; the day, fatal to despots, had arrived, when the revenues of the state could no longer meet its expenditure. The peace which Domitian had patched up in Germany, and imposed upon his lieutenants in Britain, might relieve the military chest in those quarters, but the increase of pay which the soldiers had extorted must at least have balanced this reduction. His attempt to reduce the numbers of the soldiery produced both alarm and peril, and seems to have been abandoned as impolitic or impracticable.[1] The means of raising fresh supplies for his personal extravagance, or for the shows and largesses which the people unceasingly demanded, were unfortunately too obvious. The emperor readily listened to the insinuations of his freedmen and flatterers. The noblest and wealthiest of his subjects were denounced as disaffected and dangerous. Already, in his third year of power, Domitian allowed himself to be seduced into the paths of proscriptions and confiscations, and the senate shuddered at the apparition of a new Nero or Caligula.[2] The people witnessed with indifference the terror of the great, while they applauded the establishment of the

Domitian is pressed for money, and commences a series of confiscations.

audi Memnonem;" Orelli, *Inscript.* i. 521. The fourth year of Domitian commenced in Sept. 84.

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 12.

[2] Euseb. *Chron.* ann. 2099, Domitiani 3. (from Oct. 83): "Domitianus nobiles multos relegavit et occidit." Clinton, *F. R.*, sub. ann. 84. Comp. Oros. vii. 10.: "Nobilissimos e Senatu invidiæ simul et prædæ causa . . . . interfecit," &c.

Capitoline games, which were founded, in fact, on the ruins of the most illustrious Roman houses.[1]

Domitian refrains from further interference in Germany.

The prostration of the imperial finances was soon apparent in the inability of the government to interfere for the protection of its clients and suppliants in Germany. Rome had recently given a prince to the Cherusci; but the nation had risen against a nominee bred in a foreign city, the son of a chief who had demeaned himself by taking the name of Italicus, and they had thrown themselves upon the protection of the Chatti. In another quarter the Quadi and Marcomanni, who had also allowed Rome to nominate their ruler, found themselves attacked by the Lygii and Hermunduri, tribes of the interior. They appealed to the emperor for support; but, instead of armed legions, he sent them a deputation of a hundred knights with presents and promises.[2] Domitian well understood the true interest of his government, and he was disposed to look calmly on while the Germans fought out among themselves their private quarrels. Rome had surrounded the borders of her empire with a zone of half-reclaimed barbarians, but the cries of these dependents for assistance revealed the existence beyond them of another zone, far broader, of wholly unbroken communities whose names had not yet been bruited in Italy. The Hermunduri contended with the Chatti for the salt mines on the river Saale, in the very heart of Germany: the Chamavi and Angrivarii, which last may be placed in the district of Osnaburg, attacked the Bructeri on the Lippe. Sixty thousand of this nation,

[1] Juvenal, iv. in fin.: "Lamiarum cæde madenti." The head of this wealthy house, the former husband of Domitia, was sacrificed about this period to the cupidity rather than to the jealousy of Domitian.

[2] Dion. lxvii. 5.; Plin. *Hist. Nat.* iv. 25.: "regnum Vannianum;" from Vannius, king of the Quadi and Marcomanni, who succeeded through Roman influence to Maroboduus and Catualda.

says Tacitus exultingly, were slain, by the hands, not of Romans, but of their own countrymen, for the benefit of the Romans, *which is even more gratifying;* and the tribe, he adds, was utterly annihilated. The philosophic historian was too sanguine in his patriotism. The name of the Bructeri reappears at intervals in the annals of border warfare, and even in the fifth century retains a place among the German tribes enumerated by Claudian, all of whom, no doubt, clutched their share of the spoils of the falling empire.[1]

Hostile attitude of the Dacians.

In one quarter of the northern world, however, it was impossible to retain this indifferent attitude. Twice already have the Dacians come before us as a restless people who troubled the Roman provinces on the Lower Danube. In the latter years of Tiberius they had burst into Pannonia, and the weary or timid emperor had made no vigorous effort to restrain them.[2] Again, in the heat of the late civil wars, they had watched the moment when the strength of the legions had been withdrawn from Mœsia, and crossing the frontier stream, had swept away the slender outposts of the empire, and threatened to storm the head-quarters of the provincial government. The fortunate turn of Vespasian's affairs in Italy, allowed Mucianus to detach one legion, the Sixth, from the forces he was himself bringing up from the East; and with this brigade, reinforced shortly afterwards by some battalions from the army of Vitellius, Fonteius Agrippa recovered the

[1] "Pulsis Bructeris et penitus excisis vicinarum consensu nationum." Tac. *Germ.* 33. The date of the event referred to is not given. The book *De Moribus Germ.* is supposed to have been written A.D. 99, the third year of Trajan. In the early part of this reign Spurinna is said to have gained a victory over the Bructeri. Plin. *Ep.* ii. 6. This nation finds a place too in the Peutinger Table of the third century. Comp. also Claudian, viii. 451.: "Accola sylvæ Bructerus Hercyniæ." Greenwood, *Hist. of the Germans,* i. 173. note. See also Bede, *Hist. Eccles.* v. 10.: "Antiqui Saxones Boructuarii . . . . paganis adhuc ritibus servientes."

[2] Suet. *Oct.* 21., *Tib.* 41.

province, and drove the barbarians beyond the Ister.[1] Dion considers, probably with justice, that the inhabitants of both banks of the Ister were homogeneous, and that the people whom the Romans designated as Dacians were known to the Greeks by the appellation of Getæ. Popularly, however, the former name is given to the tribes beyond the river, the latter to those within it; the one were the enemies and invaders, the others the subjects and provincials of the empire. Stretching from the Theiss to the Euxine, these tribes, though known by one generic name, formed a confederation of various communities. They had apparently a common capital, or temple, or place of assembly in the mountain fastnesses of Transylvania, from whence their broad territories gently sloped in every direction[2]; and the chief to whom they gave the command of their warlike expeditions was distinguished by the title, rather than the personal appellation, of Decebalus, or the *Strength of the Dacians.*[3]

The appellations, indeed, of the barbarian chiefs who flit from time to time across the stage in contest with the Romans have but little interest for us; for we can assign neither distinctive meaning to the names, nor character to the men who bore them. It would seem that the headship of the Dacian tribes was relinquished at this time by a king called Duras to an-

Domitian's campaigns against the Dacians. A.D. 86–90. A.U. 839–843.

[1] Tac. *Hist.* iii. 46.

[2] Of the locality more will be said hereafter; but the allusions in Statius refer to the custom of the Dacians as known in Domitian's time. *Theb.* i. 20.: "Et conjurato dejectos vertice Dacos;" *Sylv.* i. 1. 7.: "Attoniti vidit domus ardua Daci;" ib. 80.: "Tu tardum in fœdera montem Longo Marte domas;" iii. 3. 169.: "Quæ quesuum Dacis donat clementia montem."

[3] Leo, the great Sanscrit scholar, explains Decebalus by the Sanscrit Dhâvaka-bala, *Dacorum robur*, and Diurpaneus by Durpâna, *validam manum habens.* See Imhof, *Domitianus*, p. 55. Dr. Latham derives the Dacians from the Scythians, and discovers the name of Decebalus in Dizabulus, the first recorded king of the Turks. Bergmann (*Les Gètes*, p. 40.), refers it to Dakhi-valhus, Scythian words, which he interprets *Faucon diurne.*

other known to us by the name of Diurpaneus, and it is possible that this last was the same whom we shall meet with again under the title of Decebalus, in long-sustained conflict with a later emperor. In the first year of Domitian, this warrior had ventured to cross the Danube and invade the Mœsian province; he routed a legion with the loss of its eagle, slew the prætor Oppius Sabinus, stormed and sacked many towns, and ravaged the Roman territory to the foot of the Hæmus. Strong measures were required to recover and secure the province. Numerous levies were to be raised, abundant supplies were to be collected. War against the savage races of the Danube could not be made self-supporting. While Domitian, just returned from his dubious successes on the Rhine, was courting the applause of the citizens and bribing the soldiers to fidelity, his preparations for a second expedition, more important and more dangerous than the first, were being urged forward in Italy, Illyricum, and Macedonia. In the spring of 86 all was ready for the emperor's descent upon the scene of action in person. He dared not intrust the command of his forces to the brave captain he had lately humiliated; but in Cornelius Fuscus, prefect of the Prætorians, he possessed at least a faithful adherent of moderate ability, whom he could place at the head of his armies while he loitered himself in indolence at a frontier station. The Dacian chief had trained his followers in the Roman tactics, and utterly despised the adversary who now marched against him. He is said to have tauntingly required as the price of peace, a poll-tax on the head of every Roman citizen. Nor were these arrogant pretensions unsupported by valour and conduct in the field. Withdrawing from the plains of Mœsia, he enticed Fuscus to cross the Danube and follow his retreating forces, till he could close on him with advantage. The operations of the retreat and pursuit may have

Defeat and death of Cornelius Fuscus. A. D. 87. A. U. 840.

occupied some time, and we have no acquaintance with the particulars; but they ended in the complete defeat and rout of the Romans, with the loss of at least one legion and eagle, and the death of their commander.[1]

The luxury and frivolity in which Domitian indulged in the conduct of this campaign are noted by the unfriendly hand of the younger Pliny. It was particularly asserted that he caused himself to be towed on his progress up or down the great rivers of Pannonia, to avoid the dissonant noise of oars.[2] However this may be, he seems to have taken no active part in the perils of the expedition, and soon quitted it for Rome, where he was persecuting the senate and the people, while his lieutenant was penetrating into the Dacian fastnesses and perishing sword in hand.[3] The disgrace of this defeat was, however, retrieved by a considerable victory gained in a subsequent campaign by Julianus, who encountered the enemy also on his own soil at a place named Tapæ, the site of which is not ascertained.[4] Decebalus, it is said, saved himself from destruction by the stratagem of cutting down a forest to the height of

Retrieved by a subsequent success.

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 6.; Juvenal, iv. 112.; Martial, vi. 76. The death of Fuscus may be placed in the year 87 (840). The loss of the Romans was supposed to have been very great, but Tacitus, in relating these events, declared that it was the duty of a good citizen to conceal the numbers of the slain. The lost books of the *Histories* were known to Orosius, who has preserved this incident (vii. 10.): "Corn. Tacitus, qui hanc historiam diligentissime contexuit, de reticendo interfectorum numero, et Sallustium Crispum, et alios auctores quam plurimos sanxisse, et seipsum potissimum elegisse dicit."

[2] Plin. *Paneg.* 82.; Dion, lxvii. 6.

[3] Oros. vii. 10.: "Cum et in urbe senatum populumque laniaret, et foris male circumactum exercitum assidua hostes clade conficerent." The secular games followed in 88, and this was perhaps the year of the victory of Julianus.

[4] Julianus (Titius, Tertius or Tettius?) had been mentioned before by Tacitus as an able commander in Mœsia. *Hist.* i. 79.; ii. 85; iv. 39, 40.

the human figure, and clothing the stumps of the trees in armour, which deterred the Romans from advancing to complete their victory. Domitian was encouraged perhaps by this turn of fortune to leave Rome again for the frontiers, and even to advance in person against the Marcomanni, the Quadi, and the Sarmatians.[1] These tribes, it seems, had failed to furnish Rome with the supplies she had demanded of them. They were now chastised for their neglect. Domitian satisfied himself that he had made the necessary impression; though Tacitus would lead us to believe that here too the Roman arms met with some bloody reverses.[2]

Peace with the Dacians.

Meanwhile Julianus continued to press on the discomfited enemy, and Decebalus, we are assured, made many applications for peace before the emperor thought fit to declare the terms on which he would be content to grant it. Such perhaps were the fictions with which Roman vanity glossed over the disgrace of consenting, while the frontier of the empire received no extension, to make presents, or more truly, to pay a tribute to a worsted enemy.[3] Still deeper was the disgrace, though little felt perhaps at the time, that Decebalus should not venture to put himself in the hands of the Roman emperor, but should send a vassal to conduct the treaty for him. Domitian flattered the pride of the soldiers by pretending to place a crown on the head of this envoy.[4] He then sheathed his sword, and returned as a victor

[1] These names indicate, respectively, the tribes of the modern Bohemia, Moravia, and North-Western Hungary.

[2] Tac. *Agric.* 41., summing up the disasters of Domitian's reign: "Tot exercitus in Mœsia Daciaque et Germania Pannoniaque . . . amissi." So Eutrop. vii. 23.: "In Sarmatia legio ejus cum duce interfecta." Martial combines the Sarmatian with the Dacian campaigns, ix. 102.:

> "Cornua Sarmatici ter perfida contudit Istri,
> Sudantem Geticâ ter nive lavit equum."

[3] Plin. *Paneg.* 11, 12.; Dion, lxviii. 6. 9.

[4] Dion, lxvii. 7.; Martial, v. 3.

to his capital, where the people were prepared, as before, to receive him with acclamations, the poets to chant his glories, the senate to prostrate itself in servile assentation.[1] He claimed a triumph for his lieutenant's victories over the Dacians, and celebrated conjointly with them his own successes in Germany; but for the more doubtful laurels he had gained in Sarmatia, he was content to demand the lesser honour of an ovation.[2] He decreed that October, the month of his own birth, should henceforth be styled Domitianus.[3] He erected an arch, long since overthrown, but which rivalled in its day the Flavian arch on the Velia, near the gate of Triumph and the temple of Returning Fortune.[4] The

Triumphal arch and other monuments of Domitian's successes.

[1] The peace with the Dacians was concluded in December 90, about the time of the Saturnalia; comp. Martial, vii. 80, 91, 95, (Imhof, p. 65.); and Domitian returned to Rome in Jan. 91. Martial, viii. 8. The triumph may be placed in this year, in the consulship of Ulpius Trajanus and Acilius Glabrio.

[2] Euseb. ad ann. 91: "Domitianus de Dacis et Germanis triumphavit." Suet. *Domit.* 6.: "De Sarmatis lauream modo Capitolino Jovi intulit." Cf. Eutrop. vii. 23.; Martial, viii. 15.; Stat. *Sylv.* iii. 3. 168.:

"Hæc est quæ victis parcentia fœdera Chattis,
Quæque suum Dacis donat clementia montem:
Quæ modo Marcomannos post horrida bella vagosque
Sauromatas Latio non est dignata triumpho."

It is commonly said that Domitian assumed the title of Dacicus in addition to that of Germanicus. The former title, however, does not appear on his coins, as is the case with the latter repeatedly, from 84 downwards. The line of Juvenal, vi. 205.: "Dacicus, et scripto radiat Germanicus auro," refers more probably to Trajan. On the other hand, Martial's eighth book is dedicated Imp. Domitiano Cæs. Aug. Germ. Dacico.

[3] Suet. *Domit.* 13. September 13 was the date of his accession, October 24 of his birth. Comp. Macrob. *Saturn.* i. 12.; Stat. *Sylv.* iv. 1. 42.:

"Nondum omnis honorem
Annus habet, cupiuntque *decem* tua nomina menses."

[4] According to Suetonius, Domitian erected so many Jani (small double arches) and other arches to his own honour, that some one at last scratched upon them the word ἀρκεῖ, Enough! For the triumphal arch and the adjacent temple see a spirited epigram of Martial, viii. 65.

city,—all the world, says Dion,—was filled with statues of the glorious emperor, and the Capitol was adorned with many such images in gilt bronze. The citizens, anxious to possess themselves of such brilliant portraits of their favourite hero, were forbidden to make their golden statues of less than a certain specified weight. But of all these effigies the most magnificent was the equestrian colossus in gilt bronze, erected in the centre of the forum, before the shrine of the Flavian family. Planted on a lofty pedestal, from which his head might be said, in poetic language, to pierce the sky, and shining down upon the glowing roofs of halls and temples, Domitian sate with his right hand advanced in the attitude of command, and bearing in his left a figure of Minerva, his sword reposing peacefully in its scabbard, while his prancing war-horse trampled on the forehead of the captive Rhine.[1] We could have wished that the gorgeous verses of Statius had been addressed to a worthier object, and one which might have deserved a longer term of existence. But horse and rider were soon rolled in the dust, and our notion of one of the proudest works of art at Rome must be gathered from a comparison of the poet's laboured description with the existing statue of Aurelius, to which it seems to have borne a remarkable resemblance.[2]

Equestrian colossus.

[1] Statius, *Sylv.* i. 1.:

"Quæ superimposito moles geminata colosso
Stat Latium complexa forum? . . . .
Ipse autem puro celsum caput äere septus
Templa superfulges . . . . .
Dextra vetat pugnas; lævam Tritonia virgo
Non gravat, et sectæ prætendit colla Medusæ . . .
It tergo demissa chlamys: latus ense quieto
Securum . . . vacuæ pro cespite terræ
Ærea captivi crinem terit ungula Rheni."

The statue seems to have been raised on a lofty pedestal, and it was placed on the site of the Curtian pool of the early forum, possibly on the exact spot where the column of Phocas, erected five centuries later, still stands.

[2] The lines above selected from the description of Statius may show the points of resemblance and difference. The attitude of the

Triumph and shows of Domitian.

Our historians insinuate that the glories of Domitian's triumph were, after all, but borrowed plumes; that, in default of the glittering spoils which had been so often borne to the Capitol, he had caused the furniture of his own palaces to be paraded before him; and the same tradition seems to be preserved in the sneer of Tacitus at the pretended captives from the Rhine. This is a mere repetition of the stories afloat on the occasion of Caligula's mock triumph, and history which repeats itself is justly suspected. But however scanty were the trophies of the Germanic and Dacic wars, the people demanded shows and games in increasing profusion, and the emperor was compelled to plunder his own subjects to satisfy their rapacity. Large gifts, under the name of coronary gold, were required from every province and city, to bribe the soldiers and gorge the citizens.[1] All the nobility of Rome feasted with their ruler at an enormous banquet. The victor in a sterile campaign against the public enemy levied his exactions on nobles and provincials, and amidst all the exultations of his flatterers indications are not wanting, that the despot had now plunged with little restraint into a systematic career of violence and bloodshed [2]

two riders is the same; in both the right hand is advanced unarmed. From the position of the left hand of Aurelius, there can be no doubt that it held the Palladium. But Aurelius has no sword by his side, and his steed does not appear to have trodden on a captive enemy.

[1] The triumph was an opportunity for demanding large sums from the provinces under the name of "aurum coronarium." Compare, for the extortion of Domitian, Plin. *Paneg.* 17. 41. The great banquet is celebrated by Martial, viii. 50.: "Vescitur omnis eques tecum, populusque, patresque, Et capit ambrosias cum duce Roma dapes;" and by Statius, *Sylv.* iv. 2., who speaks of himself as a guest, and assures us that this immense concourse of citizens,—"Romuleos proceres trabeataque Cæsar Agmina mille simul jussit discumbere mensis,"—was entertained under the roof of the vast imperial palace: "tantum domino minor."

[2] Orosius, *l. c.* Domitian seems to have laid his hands on the funds of public institutions. Frontinus, *de Aquæduct.* 118. See Marquardt, (Becker's) *Alterthüm.* iii. 3. p. 86. note.

Appearance of a pretended Nero, A. D. 89. A. U. 842.

During the progress of these distant wars Domitian had been disturbed, though only for a moment, by the appearance of a pretended Nero, who threw himself on the support of the king of Parthia, if he was not in fact set up by the Parthians to annoy the chief of the rival empire. This event occurred perhaps in 89, when the forces of the Roman government were fully occupied with their operations against the Dacians; nevertheless Domitian assumed a high tone, and demanded the surrender of the adventurer. War was threatened, and the note of preparation already sounded. When Tiridates promptly obeyed the summons, the court poets declared that their master had conquered the Parthians, and chanted their pæan over the baffled nations of the East. The Romans were at last disabused of the imposture regarding their late tyrant, which had so long floated before their eyes; but the fable survived, as has been already mentioned among the Jews and Christians, for many generations after the fall of the Flavian dynasty.[1] A revolt among the Nasamones in Numidia, caused by some fiscal oppression, demanded that the sword of Domitian should be drawn once more in the third quarter of the globe. The insurgents stormed a Roman camp, made themselves drunk, and were cut in pieces by the prætor Flaccus. The emperor wrote boastfully to the senate announcing in the haughty language of divinity, that he had *forbidden the Nasamones to exist.*[2] Once more the poets profited by the occasion: once more Silius emulated the lofty flights of

[1] Reimar, on Dion, lxiv. 9, enumerates the false Neros—1. A slave who raised a sedition in Pontus, and was slain by Asprenas during the reign of Otho; Tac. *Hist.* ii. 8; Dion, *l. c.* 2. A man whose real name was Terentius Maximus, who appeared also in Asia; Zonar. xi. 18. 3. The pretender of whom we are now speaking, mentioned by Suetonius, *Ner.* 57., as appearing twenty years after Nero's death, *i. e.* in 89.

[2] Zonar. *Annal.* xi. 19. Νασαμῶνας ἐκώλυσα εἶναι.

Virgil, and declared that to his patron, as to Augustus, the tribes of Ganges tendered their slackened bows, the Bactrians offered their emptied quivers. Again the exploits of a Roman emperor were likened to the triumphant progress of Hercules and Bacchus. The sources of the Nile, the summits of Atlas, were at last surmounted; the sun and stars were left behind in the panting race.[1]

Revolt of Antonius Saturninus, A. D. 93. A. U. 846.

The Dacian triumph, and the acts of tyranny which accompanied it, seem to have been quickly followed by a military insurrection, to which indeed they may have mainly conduced. When an obscure soldier, such as Vitellius or Vespasian, revolted against the reigning emperor, we may conclude him to have been the instrument of the legions or their officers in the provinces in which the revolt arose; but when, as in some less conspicuous instances, a man of high family and great connexions raised the standard of insurrection, it is fair to infer that he was instigated by sympathy with the oppressed class to which he personally belonged, and rather led the legions than was impelled by them. L. Antonius Saturninus commanded the Roman forces in the Upper Germany.[2] He was

[1] Sil. Ital. iii. 612.:

"Huic laxos arcus olim Gangetica pubes
Submittet, vacuasque ostendent Bactra pharetras;
Hic et ab Arctoo currus aget axe per urbem,
Ducet et Eoos, Baccho cedente, triumphos."

Stat. *Sylv.* iii. 3. 154.:

"Nunc magnos Oriens dabit triumphos:
Ibis quo vagus Hercules et Evan,
Ultra sidera, flammeumque solem,
Et Nili caput, et nives Atlantis."

[2] We possess no continuous narrative of Domitian's reign. The epitome of Dion is peculiarly meagre and confused, and in its slight notice of the revolt of Antonius, refers its date to "about the time" of Domitian's triumph. Clinton accordingly places it in 91. Imhof, however, shows that there is reason for fixing it as late as 93. The date is important, inasmuch as all the authorities concur in remarking that it was after this event that Domitian's fears impelled him to

proud of his descent, in which he united two of the great houses of the republic, and of a name which might revive recollections both of a powerful triumvir and of a popular tribune.[1] He might claim respect from the nobles as well as favour from the people; and when the cry of the persecuted senators reached him on his prætorial tribunal, he might deem the moment propitious for opening to his soldiers the way to Rome, and invoking, at the same time, the hallowed associations of republican freedom. He intrigued with the officers of his two legions,—such was the amount to which, since the recent disturbances, the forces on the Rhine had been reduced—and the title of Imperator was conferred upon him with acclamations. Jealous as the Cæsars had long been of their lieutenants, nevertheless, in still greater jealousy of the soldiers, they had placed in their hands the pecuniary means of waging war against the state at any moment. For, in order to retain the legionary under his standards, and insure his fidelity, it was a rule of the service that a portion of his pay,—as much, it is said, as one half,—should be kept back as a reserved fund, till the period of his discharge. Even the donatives so often lavished upon the soldiers were thus intercepted on their way, and perhaps in the same pro-

the cruelties which make his name so infamous. See Suet. *Domit.* 10.; Dion, lxvii. 11.; Victor, *Epit.* 11.; comp. Tac. *Agrip.* 43.

[1] Martial, iv. 11.:

"Dum nimium vano tumefactus nomine gaudes,
Et Saturninum te miser esse pudet,
Impia Parrhasiâ movisti bella sub ursâ,
Qualia qui Phariæ conjugis arma tulit."

If we regarded Martial's pieces as following in chronological order, we might put this event as far back as 88 with Tillemont. Victor ascribes the revolt of Antonius to private pique. Domitian had called him by an opprobrious term, yet one which seems to have been freely bandied about among the loose talkers and loose livers of the time: "se scortum vocari dolebat."

portion.[1] A large sum of ready money was thus accumulated in the military chest; and when the legions bound up their own lives and fortunes with a chief who promised to lead them to plunder, they willingly allowed him to lavish this convenient hoard on the requisite preparations. Antonius expected aid at the same time from the German bank of the Rhine, and did not scruple, it seems, to call into the field the natural enemies of Rome. The danger was imminent, and Domitian, who was not timid in the face of open dangers, prepared as on former occasions to lead his own forces against his adversary. His movements, however, were anticipated by the vigour of a faithful lieutenant. Norbanus attacked Antonius on the first opening of spring, when the sudden thaw of ice prevented the barbarians from hastening across the Rhine to his assistance.[2] The rebel chief was quickly routed and slain. Norbanus had perhaps personal reasons for making all traces of the conspiracy disappear, and he destroyed the papers of the vanquished before the emperor could demand them. Domitian meanwhile was advancing from Rome with a powerful force, dragging with him many senators, old as well as young, whom he dared not leave behind him in the capital. Disappointed of full information about his concealed enemies, he extended all the more widely his precautionary severities, and sought to terrify the

Followed by proscriptions.

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 7.: "Fiduciam cessisse ex depositorum summa videbatur." The writer represents these deposits indeed as voluntary, which may have been partly the case; but the account given of the usual practice by Vegetius, *de Mil. Rom.* ii. 20, seems to offer a better explanation of the custom.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 6. The victory, according to the marvellous story of the day, was known at Rome on the very day that it occurred in Germany. Suetonius is confirmed by Plutarch, *Æmil.* 25. Similar wonders are common in Roman, and, indeed, in all history. So of the battle of Pharsalia, according to the tradition no doubt faithfully reported by Lucan, vii. 204.: "Spectari e toto potuit Pharsalia mundo."

rebel's friends by exhibiting his head upon the rostra. Such were the ghastly scenes with which the proscriptions of the olden time had generally commenced, and now again proscription followed; but the names of the victims were forbidden to be inscribed on the public records.[1] Another precaution against future insurrections was to forbid the soldiers keeping more than 1,000 sesterces in deposit at their standards; the surplus of their accumulated arrears being removed, we may suppose, to some central quarters. It was further determined that henceforth two legions should never occupy the same winter station together.[2]

Domitian's terror and cruelty.

These jealous measures show how deep a gloom of distrust was thickening before Domitian's vision. Hitherto he had been content perhaps to indicate to the delators a few among the high nobility, who, if condemned with a decent show of judicial process, would be acceptable victims offered to the necessities of the fiscus. Now, however, a feeling more potent than cupidity seized and mastered him. In dire alarm for his power and his life, he saw an enemy in every man of distinction in the city or the camps; and the short career which yet remained to him became one continued paroxysm of terrified ferocity.[3]

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 10. describes the torments inflicted on the culprits. Dion, lxvii. 11.: ἐκώλυσε σφᾶς ἐς τὰ ὑπομνήματα ἐσγραφῆναι.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 7.: "Geminari legionum castra prohibuit: nec plus quam mille nummos a quoquam ad signa deponi." 1000 sesterces=8*l.*

[3] Victor, *Epit.* 11.: "Quo per Norbanum Appium acie strato Domitianus longe tetrior in omne hominum genus, etiam in suos, ferarum more grassabatur."

CHAPTER LXII.

Internal history under Domitian.—His character, and strength of the evidence against it.—His reign an epoch of reaction.—He affects to be a reformer of manners.—Measures in honour of the gods.—Prosecution of unchaste Vestals.—Fate of Cornelia.—Enforcement of the laws of adultery.—The Scantinian law.—Laws against mutilation.—Restrictions imposed on the mimes.—Decree against the Chaldæans and Philosophers, A. D. 89.—Economic measures.—Restoration of the Capitol.—Ascription of divinity to Domitian.—Cult of Isis and Cybele.—Tribute enforced on the Jews.—Death of Clemens, and alleged persecution of the Christians.—Domitian as a governor, administrator, and legislator.—He countenances delation.—Favours the soldiers.—Caresses the populace.—Spectacles.—The Capitoline and Alban contests.—Patronage of literature repaid by flattery.—Domitian's grim humour.—The Council of the Turbot, and funereal banquet.—Death of Agricola, A. D. 93: with suspicion of poison· followed by proscription of senators, and second edict against the Philosophers.—Reign of Terror.—Domitian's personal alarms.—He is assassinated by his freedmen, A. D. 96. (A. D. 81—96. A. U. 834—849.)

Such are the fragments remaining from the wreck of history, which embrace what little we know of the external affairs of Rome at this period. Henceforth we must be content to work with these, or even scantier materials. More interest, if not more completeness, may, however, be given to our sketch of the Roman interior, by scrutinizing the character of the emperor's domestic administration. It happens, indeed, that the personal character of Domitian, the most conspicuous figure on the scene, reflects with peculiar fidelity the temper of the age, and affords a key to much of its history. The degeneracy of the sons of Vespasian paints the decline of the Roman people. In the father we have seen a type of the armed citizen of the re-

The character of Domitian represents that of the Romans of the age.

public, a Sabine by birth and temper, a genuine representative of that middle class which still retained the stamp of rustic simplicity, so long associated in the imagination of the Italians with the farmers of the hills, and the artisans of the country towns of Sabellia. But this native simplicity had seldom been proof against the seductions of city life. Transplanted from their cabins in the mountains to the pillared halls of the Quirinal or the Carinæ, the children of the Apennines were sure to lose, at least in the second generation, the rough coating of antique manners which preserved their moral strength and hardihood, and to adopt the vices of patrician luxury, together with its lustre and refinement. No wonder that, bred in the atmosphere of a court, the sons of the yeoman of Reate should quickly cast aside the conventional restraints of their homely childhood. In an earlier and manlier age the transformation would have been no unmixed evil. Civilization ripens the growing fruit, though it corrupts the fallen and over mellow. The sweets of polished life worked like poison in the veins of the plebeian of Rome's silver age, substituting feebleness for grace, pliancy for urbanity, vicious propensities for elegant tastes. The deterioration was more marked in the younger of the two brothers, inasmuch as he was tried and tempted at an earlier age; and accordingly, while the weakness of Titus appeared in occasional or partial defects, that of Domitian was found to pervade and leaven his whole character. The younger Flavius fell at once into that moral decrepitude to which the Roman people had been descending through many generations. With some kindly, and even generous emotions, not wholly devoid of refined tastes, and of a sound intelligence, he lacked the tenacity of fibre which strung the old Roman and Sabine fabric, and displayed no firm determination, no vigour and persistence in his designs. The nerves of the Roman people were relaxed by ages of indulgence, by

sensual luxuries, by moral turpitudes, by long loss of self-respect; and they were now generally unequal to any sustained exertion, unable even to keep long in view any arduous and noble object. The contradictions which appear in the career of the prince before us are the same we observe in the people generally. Such were his desire for military distinction combined with caprice and timidity in the pursuit of it; his literary tastes and leanings, associated with jealous impatience of the free exercise of letters; his softness and effeminacy of disposition, issuing in jealous cruelty; his love of law and discipline, distorted by wanton freaks of tyranny; his mixture of gloomy austerity with childish horse-play.[1] From this conspicuous example we may learn how unfit were the people whom he represented for the forms of self-government; how impossible self-government must always be to a nation which has corrupted itself by oppressive violence, by licentious dissipation, and by a tame renunciation of the rights and duties of political life.

The evidence against Domitian uniform and consistent.

There is none of the Cæsars, except perhaps Caius, against whom the evidence of history is so uniform and consistent as the younger Flavius. There may have been a conspiracy out of court; the witnesses may have been tampered with by senatorial agency. No doubt it is the duty of the judge to lean against the weight of testimony so suspiciously harmonious. But as long as he can detect no flaw in the chain of circumstance, he must leave the case, with only an admonitory caution,

[1] Dion describes him at the same time bold and passionate, crafty and dissembling: *πολλὰ μὲν ὡς σκηπτὸς ὀξέως ἐμπίπτων τισὶν ἐλυμαίνετο, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἐκ παρασκεύης ἐκακούργει*, lxvii. 1. The tyrant allowed the tyrants his predecessors to be freely lashed. Thus Statius says of Caligula: "Nec proximus hæres Immitis quanquam, et furiis agitatus, abegit." *Sylv.* iii. 3. 70., of Nero still more pointedly: "Pallidumque visa matris lampade respicis Neronem." *Sylv.* ii. 7. 118. The *Genethliacon Lucani* is a continued protest in favour of the victim of Nero's cruelty. Comp. also, *Sylv.* v. 2. 33.

to the decision of the jury represented by the judgment and conscience of succeeding generations. I would content myself with recommending all the consideration that can be fairly allowed for the frightful temptations of the position. The abilities of Domitian seem to me to have been of a higher order than they are generally represented. The fulsome eulogies of some of his flatterers have perhaps injured the reputation of the man who was at least weak enough to tolerate them. When we cast an eye on the complex system of administration which embraced the vast extent of the empire, and trace all its leading threads to the imperial cabinet on the Palatine, and to the hand of the eager, impulsive, and luxurious child of fortune there installed, we must admit that the fact of such a machine being so firmly guided for so many years is itself an answer to much of the ribald scandal which connects his name with the extreme of frivolity and licentiousness. The defects of Domitian as a governor were those of eccentricity rather than feebleness, his ideas were crude and ill-conceived, misapplications of accredited theories, political anachronisms; in short, the errors of imperfect education struggling in its meshes, casting about here and there for advisers, but rejecting the control of favourites. It was observed of Domitian by a competent critic that he was well served by his ministers [1]; and the course of our history will show that of all the Cæsars he held himself most free from their control and dictation; two facts which speak with equal force for the good sense and natural ability of a despot.

Domitian's reign and epoch of reaction.

The reign of Domitian was an epoch of administrative reaction, such as repeatedly occurred in the history both of the Republic and the Empire, when an attempt was made, or at least affected, to recall society to ancient principles

[1] Lamprid. in *Alex. Sever.* 65. The passage is evidently corrupt, but the remark seems to be attributed to Trajan.

and ideas. There is something striking in these repeated struggles of the state conscience, something even affecting in the anxiety evinced by so many of the emperors, by some who were personally among the most selfish and vicious of them, for the amendment of public morals, and the restoration of a golden age of virtuous simplicity. It was the general tendency of Paganism to look backward rather than forward; and the emperors, as protectors and patrons of the religious sentiment among their people, which had no hope for the future, instinctively directed its regretful yearnings towards the past.

Domitian affects a reformation of manners.

Domitian was, moreover, a disciplinarian by birth and breeding. The early household training of the Roman citizen still made itself felt in his temper and bearing, however surprising might be the revolution in the circumstances of his family. The antique severity of Sabellia had been celebrated from primitive times: Vespasian had retained on the throne of the world the homely manners of his rude stock. The sons, especially the younger, while they cast off the manners, retained in no slight degree the traditions and prejudices of their fathers. Domitian was not deterred by any sense of his own vices from the attempt to reform the morals of his countrymen. He had forfeited none of the Sabine faith in temperance and chastity, by his personal indulgence in the grossest excesses. Less subtle than Augustus, less an imitator than Claudius, his projects of revival sprang with more genuine impulse from his own heart, than those of either of his predecessors. He had no need of the sanctimonious pretensions which cast on Augustus the taint, or at least the suspicion of hypocrisy. The empire which the first princeps founded on a moral sentiment was now firmly fixed, and the citizens had learnt to acquiesce in the decay of manners as the law of their destiny. Domitian's

attempts at reform were unquestionably sincere; he had no political interest to serve by alarming the national conscience; but his measures sprang from a morbid taste for petty discipline. Nor was his rigid religionism the bastard product of a seared heart and a troubled conscience: it was not the despairing effort of the startled sinner to slake the furies of remorse by a bloody propitiation. It was rather a mixture of vanity and fanaticism engendered by the prophecies and portents which had heralded the elevation of his house, and by the fortune which had saved him in the crisis of a godless anarchy, and made him the instrument for restoring the patrons of Rome to their august abodes. Scarcely was Domitian seated on his throne when he began to hold his inquest as chief pontiff on the irregularities imputed to certain of the Sacred Virgins. The fire on the altar of Vesta, the mysterious patroness of the commonwealth, had been tended from the earliest ages by a college of pure maidens, devoted to the solemn duty by the noblest parents, honoured with every mark of outward deference, bound by the most awful sanctions to preserve their virtue unsullied till advancing years should release them from their honourable servitude. To such purity, such sanctity, the mere idea of death was repugnant. The culprit for whom they interceded must be pardoned; the criminal on whom they barely cast their eyes on his way to the scaffold, must be exempted from the penalty of his delinquencies. But on the other hand the punishment of guilt in one so honoured must be signal; the sinner must be cut off from the land of the living, and hidden away from the sight of her fellow-creatures. The blood of the wanton Vestal was not to be shed by man; the sword of earthly justice must not fall upon her; a higher tribunal demanded a more solemn and appalling sentence. No corpse

His zeal for the purity of the Vestal Virgins.

could be buried in the city; but in placing the Vestal's tomb at a spot within the walls the Romans seemed to violate no legal principle, for she descended alive into the earth.[1] The horrid rite was said to have been originally sanctioned by Numa, and tradition told of its having been more than once enacted in the first and brightest ages of the republic. But though amidst the relaxation of later manners, the sacred ministers of the pure goddess were less than ever exempt from infirmity, the sacrifice had been rarely repeated, and for more than two centuries wholly disused.[2] It was generally under the pressure of a public calamity, such as a pestilence, or the occurrence of evil omens, that the priests had calmed or attempted to calm the terror of the citizens by decreeing this fearful expiation; and a victim sought with such a purpose was sure to be found. Had Nero been a religious reformer he would doubtless have required the sacrifice of a Vestal after the burning of the city. Fortunately that monster of cruelty was not superstitious. But Rome had now a tyrant who was cruel and superstitious also. And with his superstition was mingled perhaps some feeling of spite towards his father and brother, with whom he always maintained a tacit rivalry. He complained that his predecessors had relaxed from the old prescriptions of religion, and had neglected the due propitiation of the national divinities. The burning of the Capitol, twice repeated, had demanded a signal expiation, and no such expiation had been made. Domitian inquired into the conduct of the

[1] The ritualists explained this mode of execution as an offering to Vesta, who was identified with Tellus, the goddess of the earth. Ovid. *Fast.* iv. 459.

[2] The case of Opimia occurred A. U. 273; that of Urbinia 284. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* viii. 89., ix. 40. Livy mentions the sentence against Floronia in 536, which she seems to have escaped by flight, xxii. 57.; and a still later instance is recorded by Dion in 640. See Reimar on Dion, lxvii. 3.

Sacred Virgins; the inquisition was carried back to past years; two members of the college were denounced, examined, and convicted; but the temper of the age was supposed to be averse from the literal execution of the frightful penalty, and, instead of being buried alive, the culprits were allowed to kill themselves. Their paramours, who might have been scourged to death in the comitium, were graciously permitted to retire into banishment.[1] Domitian had been personally intent on a prosecution from which he expected great glory to redound on his administration; thus far public opinion was undoubtedly with him, and encouraged him to proceed in his investigations.[2] A third victim, named Cornelia, was soon brought before him, whose fate is recorded in a letter of the younger Pliny, in which the dreadful details of these barbarities are vividly related.[3] Domitian, advancing from horror to horror, now determined to exact the penalty in all its atrocity. The culprit was condemned and duly entombed alive, with a crust and a flask of water, in a vault prepared for her. The narrator is moved indeed to pity in his account of the poor creature's protestations of innocence; yet even he feels more keenly the arrogance of the chief pontiff in summoning his priests to his imperial villa at Alba, instead

Inquisition into their character.

Cornelia buried alive. A. D. 91.

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 8. It is with reference to these cases apparently that Domitian boasted, according to Dion, of his clemency in not exacting the full penalty of the law. Dion, lvii. 3.: *ἠγάλλετο ὅτι τὰς ἀειπαρθένους ὡς ἠνδρωμένας οὐ κατώρυξεν, ἀλλὰ ἄλλως ἀποθνήσκειν ἐκέλευσε.*

[2] Even Apollonius the philosopher, in the biography of Philostratus, seems to approve of the emperor's pious severity, vii. 6.: *καὶ μὴν καὶ λόγου ἀφικομένου ὡς λαμπρὰν κάθαρσιν εἴη Δομετιανὸς πεποιημένος τῆς Ρωμαίων Ἑστίας . . . . . εἰ γὰρ καὶ σὺ, ἔφη, καθαρθείης, Ἥλιε, τῶν ἀδίκων φόνων ὧν πᾶσα ἡ οἰκουμένη μεστὴ νῦν.*

[3] Plin. *Ep.* iv. 11. Eusebius gives the date A. D. 91., but in *Chron Pasch.* the event stands two years earlier. Clinton, *Fast. Rom.* in ann. 91.

of the official mansion in the forum, than the abominable cruelty of the sentence itself. The alleged partner of the crime, a Roman knight, was scourged to death, protesting his innocence also; a prætorian, named Licinianus, who was suspected of criminality with her, but against whom proof seemed to fail, was induced to make a confession, upon which his escape from the city was connived at. Domitian feared that he had shown too great eagerness to convict; and on the culprit's avowal, exclaimed with evident satisfaction, that he was now himself acquitted. Licinianus was allowed to remain in banishment, and some portion of his property was reserved from confiscation. Such however was the sympathy of the people with these propitiatory sacrifices, that even after Domitian's fall, the virtuous Nerva, his successor, did not think proper to recall the exile.[1]

Domitian enforces the laws of adultery.

The zeal of Domitian in this matter was actuated not by a moral, but by a religious feeling. He was concerned for the maintenance of an ancient cult, not for the preservation of personal chastity. The purity of the Vestals was dear to the gods, and the sovereign pleasure of the gods must be shielded from outrage by human disobedience. But next to the purity of the Sacred Virgins, the gods fixed the seal of their approval on the purity of married life, when it had once been consecrated by the sanctions of certain specific ceremonies. The sole object of the laws against adultery, prescribed by Augustus, and enforced from time to time by his successors, was to conciliate the divine patrons of the married state, and we must not confound the imperial legislation on this subject with the attempts of later rulers, under the influence

[1] Plin. *l.c.*: "Exilium molle velut prœmium dedit. Ex quo tamen postea clementia divi Nervæ translatus est in Siciliam, *ubi nunc profitetur.*" He supported himself by teaching rhetoric.

of Christian ideas, to repress sins of incontinency and elevate the morals of society. Amidst the degradation of manners at this period, the citizens themselves seem to have been but imperfectly aware of their master's real aim. The old religious ideas were dissolving, and some vague moral instincts rising, at the same time, into greater prominence among them, while their ruler was personally actuated only by the desire of reviving the old ideas, and was utterly incapable of sympathy with the new. The sins of Domitian, freely cited against him in pasquinade and innuendo, were gross moral delinquencies[1]; but he was a blameless worshipper of the divinities of the Capitol. He might live in incestuous intercourse with his own brother's daughter after her widowhood; but he had stiffly declined to marry her as a virgin, and contract a union which, though sanctioned by a recent enactment, was fundamentally opposed to the principles of the state religion. When he upheld and enforced the law of adultery, the satirist might assert that such newfangled strictness was enough to terrify the licentious deities of Olympus; but Mars and Venus were not transgressors of the Julian law, and Vulcan had not taken his celestial spouse with the holy rites of confarreation.[2] Even Domitian's false principles were better than none at all. The dawn of better things, however, was beginning to break, and the heathens were feeling their way with doubt and hesitation towards it. The twelfth of the Cæsars was the last of the reactionary emperors; from henceforth their at-

[1] Pliny, *l. c.*, scoffs at the zeal for purity of a judge who was said to live in incest with his own niece: "Cum ipse fratris filiam incesto . . . . polluisset." Comp. *Panegyr.* 52. 63.

[2] Juvenal, ii. 29.:

> "Qualis erat nuper tragico pollutus adulter
> Concubitu, qui tum leges revocabat amaras
> Omnibus, atque ipsis Veneri Martique timendas."

tempts at moral reformation began to look forward instead of backward; they made their appeal to the moral sense of man, in its gradual development, not to the effete traditions of an antique theology. The enforcement of the Julian law produced the punishment of some culprits of distinction; the crime of defamation was prosecuted with renewed severity against both men and women of the highest rank; the revival of the Scantinian enactments against a disgusting form of vice, which the law, much to its honour, had branded from ancient times, may have excited still further surprise and indignation.[1] It is true that in the later years of the republic the penalty of death was commuted in these cases to a fine of only a thousand sesterces, and the crime itself was limited to acts of incontinency between Roman citizens. Here, too, it was not the moral turpitude that the law regarded, but solely the violation of a political enactment. No delinquency was imputed to the stranger, no protection was thrown over the slave. The excesses of Domitian himself, which he allowed his court poets to deck with their choicest verses, were no violation of the principle which he now recalled into operation.[2] The subject is one on which it is impossible to dwell; but a passing allusion may suffice to explain the apparent confusion of prudery and licentiousness which reigned in the minds of the Roman legislators. In one direction indeed, and one only, Domitian seems to have deviated from his usual recurrence to ancient prescriptions, and to have acted on the motion of a more enlightened moral conscience.[3] No Ro-

Enforcement of the Scantinian law.

And of laws against mutilation.

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 8.; Dion, lxvii. 12. [2] Statius, *Sylv.* iii. 4.

[3] The insinuation that Domitian had no other motive than to cast a reflection on his predecessor seems unreasonable. Dion, lxvii. 2. The emperor's contemporaries may be suspected of flattery, as Martial vi. 2., and elsewhere, and Statius, *Sylv.* iv. 3. 13.: but Ammianus Marcellinus expresses the deliberate judgment of a much later

man legislator before him had forbidden the detestable practice of human mutilation. This iniquity had been from early times the opprobrium of the East; and so much had men's feelings been blunted to the degradation it inflicted, that eunuchs had been allowed to sit upon the throne of Persia.[1] So abhorrent however had it been to the manlier sentiment of the West, that amid all the abominations to which the Romans had debased themselves, here at least they had maintained the rights of nature and humanity long after the more effeminate Greeks had cast off the last restraints of self-respect. The custom of buying young slaves thus foully treated had been introduced into the palace from the example of the Asiatic courts, probably by Caius, the first imperial imitator of Oriental depravities; but Claudius, with his habitual recurrence to national usage, had perhaps resisted it, and had brought some impertinent remarks on himself by his regard for decorum if not for principle. Under Nero the fashion had again flourished, and spread from the palace to the mansions of the nobility. Seneca declaims with petulance rather than indignation against it; Pliny, with more dignity, is silent upon the odious subject.[2] In the writings of Martial, Statius, and Juvenal, it becomes obtrusively prominent. Domitian himself had his miserable favourites, and the custom he

age: "Juvat veterem laudare Domitianum, qui receptissima inclaruit lege, qua minaciter interdixerat ne intra terminos jurisdictionis Romanæ castraret quisquam puerum," xviii. 4.

[1] Plin. *Hist. Nat.* xiii. 9. Comp. the story of Bagoas, Diod. Sic. xvii. 5. Ammianus Marcellinus, xiv. 6., attributes the invention to Semiramis. Comp. Claudian, in *Eutrop.* i. 339. Periander of Corinth was the first to introduce it into Greece, Herod. iii. 49. And it was from Greece, or the Greek monarchies in Asia, that the Romans no doubt adopted it, though they were pleased to impute this corruption of their manners to their intercourse with Parthia. Claudian, *in Eutrop.* i. 415.: "Arsacio postquam se regia fastu Sustulit, et nostros corrupit Parthia mores."

[2] Senec. *Epist.* 95. 24.; *de Brev. Vit.* 12. 4.

pretended to denounce was never abandoned in the high places of the empire till it was again forbidden by Christian legislators.[1]

Measures against the mimes.

This edict was intended to curb the shameless luxury of the great, and restore the modest dignity of ancient manners among the senators and nobles. In order to brace the morals of the lower ranks, our reformer revived the laws of his predecessors against the instruments of more vulgar pleasures, the singers and dancers of the theatres, whose contentions, or rather the contentions of whose patrons and partisans, had troubled the police of the city for many generations. Augustus had issued proclamations to control these noxious artists, and Tiberius had banished them from Rome. They were denounced to the guardian of public virtue, not untruly, as corrupters of the women as well as violators of the peace of the city. But these attempts had signally failed. Under Nero the factions of the theatre and the circus had filled the streets with tumult and bloodshed. The mimes found no doubt a protector in the prince of mimes, but in fact the passion of the populace for these performances had always defeated the legislation of the reformers. Vespasian seems to have desisted from what he deemed a futile proscription. It was not till Domitian's accession to power that another serious effort was made to impose a check on these disorders. The measures of this prince were moderate, and perhaps the circumstances of the times favoured his interference. The increasing extent and frequency of the shows in the amphitheatres, the introduction of new and grosser forms of public amusement, may

[1] The edict of Domitian was repeated in later times, showing that the practice was not eradicated. See the *Digest.* xlviii. 8. 384. Comp. also Justin Martyr, *Apol.* i. 29. The legislation of the Christian emperors on the subject is reviewed by Wallon, *Hist. de l'Esclavage, &c.*, Pt. iii. ch. x.

have weaned the populace from the more refined diversions of dancing and singing. To the smaller class who still retained a taste for art and elegance, the emperor allowed the gratification of witnessing the ballet in their private houses, and he was satisfied with merely forbidding such performances in public.[1] From this time the regulations against the mimes were alternately enforced and suspended; but no such scandal seems again to have arisen from them as in the first century of the empire. Domitian had also his personal favourites among this profession, and allowed them easy access to his person. Such was Latinus, who boasted that his manners were untainted by the dissoluteness common to his associates, and that he was a player only upon the stage.[2] Such too was Paris, a man of greater note, the Roscius of the empire, who seems to have justified the imputation cast on his profession of corrupting female morals, if the story be true that he was the notorious paramour of Domitia, and was at last waylaid and assassinated in the streets, on that account, by the emperor's orders. Domitian hardly refrained, in the first access of passion, from inflicting death upon his consort also. As a noble Roman he could not do less than solemnly divorce her; but he did not long endure the separation, and presently recalled her to the palace, pretending that the people required it.[3] His rage, however, against the seducer

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 7.: "Interdixit histrionibus scenam, intra domum quidem exercendi artem jure concesso." On the other hand, he added two *factions*, the golden and the purple, to the four already established in the circus. Suet. *l. c.*; Dion, lxvii. 4.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 15.; Martial, i. 5., ix. 29., who makes him say of himself: "Sola scenicus arte feror:
Nec poteram gratus domino sine moribus esse."
Latinus, however, had other recommendations to imperial favour, if, as is conjectured, he was the delator of Juvenal, i. 35., vi. 44.

[3] Dion, lxvii. 3.; Suet. *Domit.* 3. Dion mentions the divorce under the year 83 (the 9th consulship of Domitian) and the date of so

was not appeased even by the death of the victim. He seized and chastised the unfortunate player's admirers, when they assembled on the spot where he had fallen, and strewed it with flowers. Some indeed ascribe the edict against the mimes to this personal mortification; but we must guard ourselves against the proneness of our authorities to find a special motive for every occurrence of the times. The prohibition was more probably part of the settled policy already noticed. Thus when a quæstorian senator ventured to appear on the stage, an irregularity against which Augustus, as we have seen, had so earnestly contended, Domitian revived the precedent of the first imperial reformer, and expelled the offender from the illustrious order.[1]

Edicts against the astrologers and the philosophers. A. D. 89. A. U. 842.

The same jealousy with which the government had so long regarded the licentiousness of the stage, had been extended even from an earlier period, to the Chaldæans and astrologers, the men of occult science, who agitated society with visions and predictions, and filled with nefarious intrigues the families of the citizens. Every interdict on players and dancers was accompanied with a proclamation against the *mathematici*. Vespasian's practical good sense had tolerated this class also; for the evil, if repressed in one shape, was sure, as he knew, to spring up in another. The diviners indeed deserved some favour from the adventurer whom their breath had seemed to waft to fortune. But Domitian, the third of his dynasty, might fear every portent of change, which

solemn an act must have been well known. But this was at least ten years from the marriage, and Domitian was supposed to have been long carrying on his intercourse with Julia, which he continued after receiving his wife back.

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 8.: "Quæstorium virum, quod gesticulandi saltandique studio teneretur, movit senatu." Dion. lxvii. 13., adds the name Cæcilius Rufinus. I presume that the culprit exhibited himself in public.

to him could only be a change from good to evil. In common with all the princes who succeeded to an hereditary throne, he was induced to regard the prophets as his natural enemies.[1] It is impossible to say to what extent the astrologers and the philosophers were now connected together. Apollonius of Tyana, for instance, one of the greatest moral teachers of the time, appears to us, even in the pages of his own biographer, as a diviner and a thaumaturge; it is possible, however, that his character in this respect is misrepresented by the injudicious admiration of a less intelligent age. But enough intimacy subsisted, doubtless, between the two classes, to excite the jealousy of the government, and to induce Domitian to renew his father's decrees against the professors of Grecian wisdom. It does not appear indeed that he was more stringent in his measures than his predecessor. The expelled philosophers assembled without molestation in the Campanian villas of their noble patrons, and even under the walls of the city.[2] Probably some special exceptions were made, and a more distant banishment required in the case of the more turbulent or more notoriously disaffected. A much greater out-

[1] Tertullian pertinently asks: "Cui autem opus est perscrutari super Cæsaris salute, nisi a quo aliquid adversus illum cogitatur vel optatur?" *Apolog.* 35. Senec. *Ludus in Morte Claud.* c. 3.: "Mathematicos, qui illum, ex quo princeps factus est, omnibus annis, omnibus mensibus efferunt." Comp. Dubois de Guchan, *Tacite et son Siècle*, i. 515.

[2] Pliny, *Epist.* iii. 11., speaks of visiting one of the banished philosophers "in Suburbano:" "Equidem cum essent philosophi ab urbe submoti, fui apud illum in Suburbano, et quo notabilius hoc periculosiusque esset, fui Prætor." In the life of Apollonius, vii. 11., Demetrius, Apollonius, and others are represented as discoursing, during this period, in Cicero's Cumæan villa: "Happy insects," exclaimed one of them, on hearing the grasshoppers chirping, "that can sing your old song, free from the jealousy of tyrants, from sensual passions, from envy," &c. Yet only a few pages before (c. 4.), the biographer had represented many at least of the class as flying to Gaul, Africa, and the deserts of Scythia for safety.

cry was raised against the illiberality of Domitian than against that of his father; but whether this was owing to the greater severity of his measures, or the detestation in which he was generally held, may be still a question.[1]

Domitian assumes the censorship and institutes reforms.

To give an antique colour to these proceedings, and remind the citizens of the long-accredited principles on which they were founded, Domitian had assumed from an early period the office of censor, which he continued to hold, contrary to all precedent, throughout the remainder of his reign.[2] By repeated enactments he endeavoured to drill his subjects, at least within the city, to the maintenance of external decorum; he regulated their dress, their behaviour, their places in the theatres; he attempted to preserve, amidst the mass of nations and habits fermenting around him, an image of the ancient republic, which should attract the eye both of gods and men, and engage the favour of the one and the reverence of the other. Such were the points to which, as we have repeatedly seen, the attention of all the imperial reformers was directed, and Domitian may have had a personal motive to

[1] The *forcible-feeble* satire of Sulpicia supplies a fair measure of the importance to be attached to this act of the government, which seems to have been much exaggerated; as, for instance, in that gush of laboured rhetoric:

> "Dic mihi Calliope, quidnam pater ille deorum
> Cogitat? an terras et patria sæcula mutat,
> Quasque dedit quondam morientibus eripit artes?
> Nosque jubet tacitos, et jam rationis egenos,
> Non aliter quam cum primo surreximus ævo,
> Glandibus et puræ rursus procumbere lymphæ?"

The specific cases of punishment were those of declaimers or conspirers against the government, such as Maternus; Dion, lxvii. 12. Two edicts were issued in 89 and 93, 94. Euseb. *Chron.*, Tac. *Agr.* 2., Dion, lxvii. 13.; and the last seems to have followed on the suppression of the Antonian revolt.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 8.; Dion, lxvii. 4.: τιμητὴς διὰ βίου πρῶτος καὶ μόνος καὶ ἰδιώτων καὶ αὐτοκρατόρων ἐχειροτονήθη. Comp. Statius, *Sylv.* iv. 3. 13.; Martial, vi. 4: "Censor maxime, principumque princeps."

quicken his zeal from the wish to connect himself, as the representative of a new dynasty, with the traditions of the families which had ruled by right divine before him. But, often as we have noticed the recurrence of measures for the regulation of manners, we seldom meet with an instance of legal interference with economical interests. The government of Domitian, however, is distinguished by a sumptuary edict of this character, which cannot fail to attract observation. It gives us a glimpse, at least, of the attitude assumed by the state towards industry, whether as its patron or its oppressor. We have discovered already more than one symptom of the decay of wealth among the nobles of Rome. This decay was undoubtedly in continual progress, and was now plainly apparent in portions even of Italy. In the great towns and the more favoured districts of the coast or inland, it was disguised by a vast display of borrowed magnificence, the outlay of rent or tribute from every quarter of the globe; and the government had sought anxiously to conceal it, by attracting the wealthiest of its subjects to the neighbourhood of the capital, and fixing them with their liberal expenditure in the centre of the empire. Meanwhile the operation of natural laws was constantly working in a contrary direction. The wasteful and expensive processes of slave labour were devouring the capital of the proprietors, not in Italy only, but in all the seats of the oldest civilization, especially in Greece and the lesser Asia. This decline was at the same time hastened by the demands of the government on certain provinces, such as Africa, Spain, Gaul, and Britain, where the productiveness of the soil was generally developed by the hands of free coloni. Accordingly, not in Italy only, but in Greece and Asia, the production of corn had materially diminished, and fertile land had been withdrawn from the plough; but in its place many a ridge of barren hill-side had been scarped and

A decline of wealth begins to be perceived in Italy.

terraced for the vineyard. Wine, the produce hitherto of some limited districts of the empire, was becoming more and more the common beverage of the whole population in every province, and demanded an ever-increasing area for its production. It would seem, therefore, that the great change which had thus occurred in the economical circumstances of different parts of the Roman world, was the natural result of their amalgamation in one body politic, and the nearly uniform system of law and impost that prevailed throughout it. We may conclude that the complaints we have heard of the decay of agriculture were only partially true, and do not fairly represent the actual state of the whole empire.

Edict respecting the cultivation of the vine.

It was not to be expected, however, that the statesmen of Rome should take a broad and scientific view of interests so widely extended, and so complex in their nature, and we need not wonder at the confusion into which they fell, in seeking a remedy for evils of which they saw neither the causes nor the compensations, nor indeed are our accounts sufficiently intelligent or explicit, to enable us to understand the real action of the government, still less to penetrate its motives. A strange story is reported, on the trifling authority of Philostratus in his life of Apollonius, that Domitian forbade the cultivation of the vine in the Ionian provinces, because, forsooth, wine excited the people to tumults and seditions.[1] He commanded, not only that no more vines should be planted, but that the existing plantations should be rooted up. The Ionians, it is added, sent a deputation to Rome to plead for the

[1] Philostr. *Vit. Apoll.* vi. 42. Comp. *Vit. Sophist.* i. 12. To this edict and to that which enforced the Julian law, the temperate philosopher declared himself equally indifferent: *μόνος γὰρ ἀνθρώπων οὔτ' αἰδοίων δέομαι οὔτ' οἴνου.* Vespasian, according to Philostratus, had deprived the Greek cities of their autonomy on account of their turbulence.

industry by which they subsisted, and the sophist Scopelianus, whom they employed to argue for them, was so successful that the decree was rescinded, and penalties denounced against those who should neglect the cultivation of the vine in future. It seems more likely that this edict was part of a general measure, such as that indicated by Suetonius, by which the emperor, alarmed at the increasing dearth of corn and cheapness of wine, prohibited the withdrawal of arable land from the plough in Italy, and restricted the cultivation of the vine throughout the provinces to one half at most of the extent to which it had been developed.[1] If such an arbitrary regulation was ever seriously meant to be enforced, it is plain that it could not have been really executed, nor could the emperor himself be long deceived by the erroneous principles on which it was founded. He soon desisted from the attempt. The remembrance of it was chiefly preserved by the pungent epigram of Evenus, which declared that extirpate the vine as he might, there should still remain wine enough to pour a libation on the imperial victim.[2] The culture of the vine continued however to depend on the favour of the government. Thus we read at a later period, of the emperor Probus granting such an indulgence to certain of the northern provinces.[3] The senate long before, expressly for the advantage of the Italian vine-growers, but possibly with the further object of stimulating the growth of corn in its dependencies, proscribed the

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 7.: "Ne quis in Italia novellaret, atque in provinciis vincta exciderentur, relicta, ubi plurimum, dimidia parte: nec exsequi rem perseveravit."

[2] I cannot, with some critics, cite the line quoted above, "Glandibus et puræ rursus procumbere lymphæ," as a reference to this edict. The epigram of Evenus is a well known parody on an older couplet:

κἂν με φάγῃς ἐπὶ ῥίζαν, ὅμως ἔτι καρποφορήσω
ὅσσον ἐπισπεῖσαι Καίσαρι θυομένῳ. *Anthol.* i. 97. Jacobs.

[3] Eutrop. ix. 17.: "Vineas Gallos et Pannonios habere permisit." Vopiscus in *Prob.* 18: "Gallis omnibus et Hispanis et Britannis hic permisit ut vites haberent, vinumque conficerent."

cultivation of the vine throughout the transalpine regions.[1]

Domitian's buildings in Rome.

As regarded the observance of religious forms, Domitian seems to have felt it incumbent on him to follow closely in the steps of Augustus. Thus he repeated, as we have seen, after a lapse of only forty-one years, the celebration of the secular games by Claudius, pleading perhaps that more than a century had elapsed since that solemn ceremony had been performed by the founder of the empire.[2] He enacted with dignity the part of censor and chief pontiff, and visited with stern reproof every appearance of disrespect to the gods and their temples. When one of his own freedmen ventured to make use of some pieces of marble, destined for rebuilding the Capitol, for a monument to his son, he caused the monument to be destroyed, and flung the remains of the buried child into the sea.[3] The wondrous preservation he had himself experienced in the sack of the sacred fane, seems to have sunk deeply into his mind, and fancying himself the special object of divine protection, he made genuine efforts to repay the obligation with lavish expenditure. It was his privilege to retrieve the disasters which had befallen the empire under a father and brother less favoured than himself. To

[1] Cicero, *de Republ.* iii. 9.: "Nos vero justissimi homines, qui transalpinas gentes oleam et vitem serere non sinimus, quo pluris sint nostra oliveta, nostræque vineæ." It is evident that this interdict did not long continue in force.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 4.; Censorin. *de Die Nat.* 17.; Tac. *Ann.* xi. 11. The secular games of Domitian are referred to his fourteenth consulship, *i.e.* A.U.C. 841. Eckhel, vi. 384.; Clinton, sub. ann. On this occasion Tacitus officiated as one of the college of Quindecimvirs. He was also prætor at the time. "Domitianus edidit ludos sæculares, iisque intentius affui sacerdotio quindecimvirali præditus ac tum prætor." Comp. *Hist.* i. 1.: "Dignitatem nostram a Vespasiano inchoatam, a Tito auctam, a Domitiano longius provectam non abnuerim."

[3] Suet. *Domit.* 8.

him it fell to complete a second restoration of the national temple, and the splendour with which he executed the blessed work far exceeded the modest dignity with which his staid predecessors had proposed to invest the edifice. Plutarch had himself seen lying at Athens columns of bright Pentelic marble, of exquisite proportions, which were brought to Rome, and there, as he complains, chiselled, scraped and polished, and reduced to an ungraceful slenderness. The ornamentation of the edifice was of the most lavish character.[1] The gilding of the bronze tiles with which it was covered was the gift of Domitian; the estimate we have received of its amount, even if we include in it the gilding of the bases and capitals of the pillars, and of the innumerable statues which crowded the precincts, exceeds belief.[2] But the restoration of the Capitol was not the only monument of Domitian's piety. The recent fire had left many sacred sites desolate, both on the Capitoline and in the Campus. Augustus might have led the way; but he would have reqûired his wealthy nobles to follow; and many of them would have competed gallantly with him in the display of patriotism and liberality. Such times were now past. The shrunken revenues of the magnates of Rome could not vie with the fiscus of the emperor,

[1] Plutarch. *Poplic.* 15.: *οἱ δὲ κίονες . . . ἐν τῇ Ῥωμῇ πληγέντες αὖθις καὶ ἀναξυσθέντες, οὐ τοσοῦτον ἔσχον γλαφυρίας ὅσον ἀπώλεσαν συμμετρίας, πέρα τοῦ καλοῦ διάκενοι καὶ λαγαροὶ φανέντες.*

[2] Plutarch assures us that the gilding, *ἡ χρύσωσις*, amounted to 12,000 talents, which, according to the ordinary computation of about 200*l.* to the talent, would amount to 2,400,000*l.*, and says that this immense sum exceeded any private fortune at Rome. Stilicho, at the beginning of the fourth century, stripped the doors of some of their gold plating; and Genseric, in the sack of Rome, 455, carried off further spoils from the Capitol; but the gilding of the roof continued for many centuries to be a conspicuous ornament of the city, and contributed to give her the name "Urbs aurea," which she retained late into the middle ages. Gregorovius, *Gesch. der Stadt Rom. im Mittelalter*, i. 41.

nor could the nobles even modestly imitate their prince's generosity. Domitian had no Agrippa, no Pollio, no Mæcenas, no Taurus, to erect temples for the gods, or halls, theatres, and baths for the public. The universal patron was Cæsar. Several buildings, both religious and secular, were restored or constructed by Domitian; among them a temple of Minerva in the Campus, and another in the Forum Transitorium, a temple of Isis and Serapis, to which we may add, a restoration or repair of the Pantheon. The Diribitorium, the great hall of Agrippa, which boasted a roof of the widest span in the ancient world, had suffered in the fire of Titus, and the second century of the empire lacked skill or energy to cover it again.[1] This, however, seems to have been the only instance of acknowledged inferiority. On the contrary, from this time forward the emperors continued to adorn the city with new works, the size and splendour of which increased with every generation; but these were the works of the emperors only.

Ascription of the divine character to Domitian.

But with all his zeal for the honour of the national divinities, the chief of the Roman people could not fail to remark that none of their deities was so present to their minds as an object of regard and veneration, as the person of the prince himself, their august patron and protector. A feeling of mysterious awe attached to the living principle which seemed to animate the conduct of human affairs from the centre to the circumference of the empire, and this feeling was easily lost in religious devotion to the visible chief of the state. Domitian followed the bias of the times in sanctioning more openly than hitherto the outward expression of Cæsar-worship. The recognition of his father and brother as

[1] Dion, lxv. 8.: ἦν δε οἶκος μέγιστος τῶν πωπότε μιαν ὀροφὴν ἐχόντων. νῦν γὰρ δὴ, τῆς στέγης αὐτοῦ καθαιρεθείσης, ὅτι οὐκ ἠδύνηθη αὖθις συστῆναι, ἀχανὴς ἐστί.

divinities, already cordially accepted, made it scarcely possible to distinguish the nature of the dead and the living members of the same celestial house. No other emperor had succeeded to an actual father and brother. No other emperor except Titus himself had even descended directly from a deified ancestor.[1] Accordingly the notion of Domitian's participation, even while yet alive, in the divine nature, was instinctively admitted by the vague superstitious feelings of the people. It was the pleasure, and still more the interest of courtiers and parasites to foster and exaggerate this feeling; but even Statius and Martial generally confine themselves to oblique insinuations, and leave the direct inference to the reader's imagination. Domitian had thronged the narrow precincts of the Capitoline hill with statues of himself, which thus jostling the most venerable images of the national Gods, challenged the worship of the devotees of Jupiter. And so the poets contrived to mingle the idea of the emperor as Ruler, Father, Tarpeian and Capitoline, with that of the Greatest and Best of beings, who was adored under the same appellations. They described his statues as eternal, a pretty strong intimation that he was eternal himself. They styled his works, his exploits, his verses divine, a pretty clear avowal of the divinity which was supposed to animate their author.[2] Still the emperor refrains from claiming divine honours. While he allows victims to be slaughtered before his statues, and even the beasts which were driven towards the temples to be stopped on the way and sacrificed to his own images, while he raises to heaven not only his brother, who had worn the purple, but his infant child, who had attained to no popular veneration, he abstains from erecting a temple to himself, or placing his own altar by the

[1] Plin. *Panegyr.* 11.: "Vespasianum Titus, Titum Domitianus (dicavit cœlo); sed ille ut Dei filius, hic ut frater videretur."
[2] Martial, v. 5.: "Ad Capitolini cœlestia carmina belli."

side of the altars of the Flavian divinities.[1] If, however, it was only under the veil of a rhetorical figure that the citizens might claim to address their ruler as God, they professed to be delighted at the sense and natural piety of strangers, who were scared by no conventional scruplès from the simple effusion of their enthusiastic adoration.[2] If Domitian is not a god in the abstract, he is at least as a god to the Romans.[3] The government of the terrestrial globe is a delegation from the Powers of Olympus to the Power of Rome, while yet he lives the life of a man among men.[4] Domitian and his consort represent to Roman eyes the Ausonian Jupiter and Juno.[5] The object of all this flattery favoured the illusion with deliberate affectation. When he took back his wife after the divorce, he declared that he had restored her, not to his *pillow*, as a mortal might say, but to his *sacred cushion*; he encouraged the mob of the theatres to hail him and the empress as *Our Lord and Lady*;

[1] Thus Dion expressly declares that no temple, even in his day, had been raised to a living emperor in Rome or Italy, to no emperor, at least, "of any consideration:" *ἐφ' ὁποσονοῦν λόγου τίνος ἄξιον*, as if to exclude Caligula. Dion, li. 20. The only child of Domitian (born A. D. 82, Euseb. *Chronic.*), which died in infancy, appears on coins as "divus Aug. fil." Comp. Sil. Ital. iii. 629.: "Siderei juxta radiabunt tempora nati;" and Stat. *Sylv.* i. 1. 97.:

"Ibit in amplexus natus, fraterque, paterque,
Et *soror*; una locum cervix dabit omnibus *astris*;"

from which it would appear that a sister had been canonized also. Comp ; Suet. *Vesp.* 3.; Gruter, ccclxvi. 4.

[2] Martial, v. 3., on the adoration of the Dacian Degis.

[3] Martial, vii. 2.: "*Nostri* mente calens Dei." Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* iv. procem.

[4] Statius, *Sylv.* v. i. 37.: "Notat ista Deus qui flectit habenas
Orbis, et humanos *propior Jove* digerit actus."

[5] Statius, *Sylv.* iii. 4. 18.: "Jupiter Ausonius, pariter Romanaque Juno." Comp. Martial, ix. 37.: "Phryx puer *alterius* gaudia nota Jovis." Both Augustus and Tiberius had been represented in statues and cameos as the earthly Jupiter. See Mongez, *Icon. Rom.* pl. 19, 22, 26.; Müller, *Denkmäler der alten Kunst.* p. 47, 50. So Germanicus and Agrippina appear in a cameo as Triptolemus and Ceres, Livia as Cybele. Possibly all these are provincial symbolisms.

and, finally, he suffered his procurator to style him, in a public document, *Our Lord and God.* The daring phrase was eagerly caught up and popularly repeated.[1]

Disrespect to the emperor treated as blasphemy.

It was, no doubt, a pleasant conceit of Martial's, that when Domitian replaced the head of a colossal Hercules with his own celestial countenance, the jealousy of Juno was at last appeased by the happy metamorphosis. But these pretensions to divinity, whether received in earnest, or handled in joke, led naturally to a terrible consequence. Every act which could be construed into disrespect to the prince became, when viewed through this fatal medium, impiety and sacrilege. Thus, an unfortunate citizen, who complained, in the amphitheatre, of the emperor's partiality to one of the combatants, was seized and thrown into the arena for blasphemy.[2] The case is all the worse, if, as seems too probable, the common feeling of the spectators assented to this arbitrary interpretation. But the consciousness, no doubt, of their self-degradation made the Roman people as jealous of one another as was their master of them. The slaves of Domitian could not bear that any of their fellow-men should walk erect and independent. We may remark how differently certain creeds and cults were now regarded, on which the popular theology might be expected to look with equal jealousy. Isis and Cybele became henceforth fully naturalized at Rome; they were accepted as allies of the indigenous divinities, with whom they were content to exercise a divided sovereignty.[3] The charges of effemi-

Cults of Isis and Cybele naturalized at Rome.

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 13. Comp. Martial, viii. 2. 6.; Aurel. Victor, *Cæs.* 11.; Dion, lxvii. 13.; Eutrop. vii. 23.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 10. Comp. Zonar. *Ann.* xi. 19.: *γυνή τις ότι ἐναντίον εἰκόνος αὐτοῦ ἀπεδύσατο ἐφονέυθη.*

[3] The worship of Isis and Serapis was established about this period at Rome, according to the statement of Tertullian, *Apol.* 6.; and

nacy and vice, once so justly made against their votaries, were at least tacitly withdrawn. But the freedom and independence of Judaism, respected by a manlier age, and favoured by more magnanimous Cæsars, rebuked the lifeless superstitions of the declining empire, and offended the vanity of a Domitian. The political self-assertion of the Jews had been sufficiently crushed, at least for a season; the nation was, to all appearance, effectually subdued; but its opinions survived, and permeated the veins and arteries even of Italy herself. With the destruction of their temple and the abolition of their ritual observances, the metaphysical dogmas of the Jews would appear more mysterious than ever to a people whose religion was almost wholly absorbed in the external and the sensuous. *Judea*, says Lucan, *adores some unknown, undiscovered deity;* but fifty years later, Juvenal reproaches the followers of Moses with worshipping nought but the clouds and the sky-god, while they made a traffic of their superstitious dreams.[1] In the time of Nero, Seneca could say of them, that, though conquered they gave laws to their conqueror[2]; so firmly had they established themselves in the world's capital, so deeply had they impressed their ideas on every class of the citizens, such a de-

Judaism more than ever offensive there.

Gibbon (c. 2.) naturally supposes that it owed this favour to the gratitude of the Flavian family. Hence Statius addresses Isis with the utmost respect as Queen of Egypt and Goddess of the East:

"Isi, Phoroneis quondam stabulata sub antris,
Nunc regina Phari, numenque Orientis anheli, ...
. . . Marti juvenem, Dea, trade Latino." *Sylv.* iii. 2. 110.

But the emperor Otho had already patronised this foreign cult, and had publicly conducted its ceremonies in the linen vestments of the Isiac priesthood. Suet. *Otho.* 12.

[1] Lucan, ii. 592.: "Dedita sacris Incerti Judæa dei."
Juvenal, xiv. 97.: "Nil præter nubes, et cœli numen adorant."
vi. 547.: "Qualiacunque voles Judæi somnia vendunt."

[2] Seneca, in a fragment quoted by S. Augustin, *de Civ. Dei*, vi. 11.: "Usque eo sceleratissimæ gentis consuetudo convaluit, ut per omnes jam terras recepta sit: victi victoribus leges dederunt."

mand had they created for the stimulus they could administer to the jaded imaginations of both women and men. From the time of Cæsar downwards, Jews had thrust themselves into every Roman society, and not least into the highest. They had been favoured by princes, courted by princes' freedmen; ministers had flattered them, matrons had caressed them. A Jewish potentate had moulded the character of the emperor Caius; a Jewish princess had enslaved the passions of the emperor Titus; a Jewish dancer had enchanted alike the empress, the senators, and the populace. Many citizens of every rank had more or less openly addicted themselves to Jewish usages and tenets, and when a Jewish sect ventured to transfer its obedience from the law of Moses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the number of its adherents in the capital of the empire would seem to have embraced Jews, Greeks, and Romans in nearly equal proportions.

Hostile attitude of the government towards Judaism, including Christianity,

Between these two branches of the same stem there reigned a deep antagonism, in which the government and the mass at least of the Roman people took no interest. When the jealousy of the government was excited against the Jews, indignant both at their turbulence and their proselytizing spirit, they might involve the Christians in the common charge, or might, perhaps, divert it from themselves upon their rivals. When, however, after the great Jewish war, that jealousy was converted into settled hostility, both the Jews and the Christians would be placed under the same ban, and if the sword was retained in its scabbard, they would be sternly forbidden to exercise their spiritual influence upon the citizens around them, or receive converts from the national religion into their ranks. Their exemption at this period from actual persecution might be secured by the demand that was made upon them for tribute. Both Jews and Christians, undistinguished by the Roman government,

moderated by the payment of the Jewish tribute.

were required to pay the double drachma, according to Vespasian's enactment, and if the Christians exclaimed against being thus confounded with a religion which they really renounced, those at least among them who were of Jewish extraction would be traced by the national token of circumcision.[1] Suetonius has recorded an instance of the harshness with which this inquisition was enforced, and it seems possible that the old man of ninety, who was required to uncover, and convicted of Judaism in spite of his own denial, was in fact a Jewish convert to Christianity.[2]

While, however, sectarians of Jewish birth were tolerated for the sake of their contributions to the treasury, Domitian, as a champion of religion, affected great indignation against the conversion of citizens to any form of Jewish manners or doctrine. When, at a later period, the Pagan conservatives sought to propitiate the gods who seemed to abandon them, they held up the Christians to popular odium as *atheists;* but this was a charge never brought specifically against the Jews.[3]

Charge of impiety and Jewish manners against citizens of rank.

[1] There seems to be a reference to the Christians in the words of Suetonius, *Domit.* 12.: "Deferebantur qui vel improfessi Judaicam viverent vitam, vel dissimulatâ origine imposita genti tributa non pependissent." As soon, however, as the Christians established their independence of Judaism, they fell under the ban of an illicit religion.

[2] Suet. *Domit. l. c.*: "Præter cæteros Judaicus fiscus acerbissime actus est. . . . . . interfuisse me adolescentulum memini, quum a procuratore, frequentissimoque concilio, inspiceretur nonagenarius senex an circumsectus esset." The tribute of the δίδραχμον continued in force in the third century (Origen, *Ep. ad Africanum*); nor do I find that there was any actual persecution of the Jews during that period. There exists a rescript of Antoninus Pius forbidding a Roman lady to bequeath money to the Jewish Society at Antioch, *Cod. Justin.* i. 9.: and Severus, after a revolt in Palestine, issued an interdict against conversions, apparently in the East.

[3] Milman, *Hist. of Christianity*, ii. 61. The charge of "atheism" was brought against the Christians in the third century, as we read in Minucius Felix, in Tertullian, Origen, and Lucian. No such accusation is advanced by Tacitus or Pliny. It was the last refuge of declining Paganism, and showed a fear of Christianity which had never been excited by Judaism.

Nevertheless, both Jews and Christians might be branded as *impious* in the Roman sense, that is, as deniers of the Roman divinities, and as tempting men to withdraw from their service. This charge of *impiety* was, it seems, now advanced against many persons of rank in the city, and combined with that of neglecting the duties of a citizen ; and to this was added the kindred charge of adopting Jewish manners.[1] Whether these culprits were guilty of Judaism or of Christianity it seems impossible to determine. If I lean to the latter interpretation, it is because Judaism seems to have lost at this time almost all its attraction in Roman eyes, and, as the creed of a conquered and degraded people, lay under the ban of ill-success, which, with Pagan inquirers, would be deemed fatal to its pretensions.[2] Among these inquirers, however, there would be some accurate knowledge of the difference between Judaism and Christianity, and while the government and the historians writing from official records would confound them carelessly together, I can believe that the new faith was at this time making real progress among the higher ranks of society, and assuming in some degree, in spite of the disabilities under which it lay, the position held in an earlier generation by the old.

Proscription of noble Romans on this charge. A. D. 95.

Nevertheless, assuming this probability, we are still as far as ever from fathoming the real motives of the tyrant for the proscription with which, in the fifteenth year of his reign, he visited some of his highest nobles, and among them some of his own nearest kindred.

Acilius Glabrio.

The first charge might be that of impiety and Judaism; but, besides these crimes, Acilius Glabrio, lately consul, was accused of the high

[1] Dion, lxvii. 14.: ἐπηνέχθη δὲ ἀμφοῖν ἔγκλημα ἀθεότητος, ὑφ' ἧς καὶ ἄλλοι ἐς τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἤθη ἐξοκέλλοντες πολλοὶ κατεδικάσθησαν.

[2] Of the contempt into which Judaism seems to have fallen at this time at Rome, I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

misdemeanour of having fought with beasts in the amphitheatre, an act which savours little of a Christian or even of a Jewish professor.[1] Flavius Clemens was first cousin to Domitian, being the son of Vespasian's brother, Sabinus, and was married to Domitian's niece, Domitilla. He had stood high in the emperor's favour. His two sons, who had received the auspicious names of Vespasianus and Domitianus, had been placed by the emperor himself under the tuition of the favourite rhetorician, Quintilian, and were destined, as all believed, to the imperial succession.[2] Suddenly the Romans learnt, with consternation, that this illustrious scion of the reigning family was arrested and convicted of the crime of Judaizing, to which was added a vague charge of withdrawing from the civil, or, perhaps, from the religious duties of a citizen. Acilius was convicted and degraded to the arena, and, when he came off victorious in the combat, was sent into exile, and promptly despatched there. Clemens was sentenced at once to death and executed; and his consort was banished to an island. Of their children we hear no further: possibly they suffered with their parents. The proscription extended to many other personages of distinction, whose names are not recorded, who seem to have been generally banished, and who, after the death of the tyrant, were recalled

Flavius Clemens and Domitilla.

[1] Dion, *l. c.*: *τὸν δὲ δὴ Γλαβρίωνα . . . . κατηγορηθέντα τά τε ἄλλα οἷα καὶ οἱ πολλοὶ, καὶ ὅτι καὶ θηρίοις ἐμάχετο, κατέκτεινεν.* Acilius Glabrio, the younger of two nobles of Domitian's court, was consul, A. D. 93.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 15.; Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* procem. iv. Suetonius applies to Clemens the stigma, "contemptissimæ inertiæ," though he had just been consul. The phrase seems to refer to neglect of Roman usages and social prescriptions, which it was more and more difficult to enforce upon the higher ranks of citizens. It is apparently the same as the "publica circa bonas artes socordia" of Tacitus, *Annal.* xi. 15., and is not to be restricted to the evasion of political duties.

among other surviving victims by his successor.[1] This proscription took place about eight months before Domitian's death, at a period when he was tormented by the utmost jealousy of all around, and when his heart was hardened to acts of unparalleled barbarity[2]; and it seems more likely that it was counselled by abject fear for his own person or power, than by concern for the religious interests of the state, however sincere he may once have been in his zeal for the honour of the gods. We must be content to draw the veil again over this slight and dubious glimpse of the precarious state of the Christians under Domitian, which has been too hastily dignified with the name of a persecution.[3]

Alleged persecution of the Christians.

[1] Tertullian states that the exiled Christians were recalled by Domitian himself, *Apolog.* 5.; but this is contradicted by Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* iii. 20., and seems in itself improbable. Comp. Oros. vii. 11.

[2] The exact date is thus ascertained: Clemens was consul A. D. 95, and gave his name to the year; but Domitian put him to death, according to Suetonius: "tantum non in ipso ejus consulatu;" therefore, immediately after the termination of the year, or at the commencement of 96. Domitian himself perished in the middle of September of that year.

[3] The ecclesiastical tradition of St. John's miraculous preservation from the boiling oil (Tertull. *de Præscript. Hæret.* 36.) has no historical value, though we may give full credit to the statement of Irenæus, that the last of the apostles was living almost at the close of the first Christian century. The Flavian persecution is claimed by Tertullian, Lactantius, Orosius, and Eusebius; but on no other grounds than those stated in the text. Eusebius gives, indeed, an interesting story from Hegesippus, which may have some foundation in fact, in reference to the inquiries instituted by Vespasian, and continued, no doubt by his successors, into all Jewish claims to the royal succession of David. The sons of Judas, "the brother of our Lord," were called before Domitian. He demanded whether they descended from David. They confessed it. Again he inquired what were their means. They declared that they possessed but 9000 denarii, and a few acres of land. They showed him their hands, hard with daily toil, in token of the simple industry by which they gained their living. Once more the emperor asked, what was the meaning of Christ's kingdom; to which they replied that it was not of this world, but should appear at the consummation of all things. Domitian, it

If Domitian was a precisian in religious affairs, not less did he carry the spirit of discipline into the administration of the laws. This branch of government, after exciting the feverish activity of Claudius, had been entirely neglected by Nero, and Vespasian was to the last too much of a blunt soldier to undertake a duty requiring tact and subtilty. Domitian had the training of a civilian, and his temper was inclined to chicane. His edicts and rescripts were issued in restless haste, and seem to have obtained little respect from posterity. But his personal diligence almost equalled that of Claudius, and was, no doubt, beneficial to his people. Nor must we let ourselves speak with disrespect of the vigilance, however often ill-directed, with which he superintended the procedure of the magistrates in Rome, and throughout the provinces.[1] Never were so many bad judges and corrupt governors brought to justice; but the vigilance of the prince in his solitary watch-tower would have availed little, had he not employed the eyes of a legion of informers. At the commencement of his principate, Domitian had trodden carefully in the steps of his predecessor in repudiating and proscribing such vile services. He had expressed his abhorrence of them in a sentence which was carefully recorded by the historians: *The prince who does not repress delation, encourages it.*[2] But the necessities of his own policy undermined this indignant virtue. The same ruler who punished the delators of Nero fostered a similar brood without scruple in his own interest. The distinction between the delator and the legitimate accuser was accurately drawn, and it will be well to bear it in mind to under-

Domitian encourages the delators.

is said, was satisfied with these answers, and, it is added, put a stop from that moment to the persecution of the Christians. *Hist. Eccl. l. c.*

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 8.; Victor, *Epit.* 11.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 9.; comp. Dion, lxvii. 1.

stand clearly the crime so often urged against the emperors.[1] In civil cases, particularly in those relating to the collection of the public dues, the government employed its own servants for the discovery and prosecution of defaulters. It was the business of the *advocatus fisci* thus to watch over the interests of the imperial revenues. But the officious zeal of irregular spies, though often really encouraged, was always professedly denounced, and such information given by slaves against their masters was repudiated with especial horror. In criminal cases the right of accusation was legally restricted to certain near relations, and the interference of a mere stranger was unauthorized delation. The legitimate pursuer, however, might employ an advocate, who stept into his place and became his representative. The provinces might thus employ a patron at Rome to accuse, in their name, their delinquent prefect; or the senate might itself appoint an advocate or accuser, as was often done in cases of public crime, particularly in cases of majesty. But the senator who, unemployed and unappointed, came forward of his own accord to accuse, was branded as a delator, and was deemed to transgress law and usage, as well as to violate the confidence which ought to reign among the members of a privileged order.[2] The difficulty in which the emperors were placed will be easily seen. Constrained as they were to veil the extent and foundation of their power, and to court, instead of demanding, the obedience and homage of their subjects, cases constantly occurred in which it was essential to their

[1] *Cod. Justin.* ix. 1., x. 11.

[2] Hence the use of the phrase, "sponte accusasse," to mark the enormity of the delator. Of Silius Italicus Pliny says, *Epist.* iii. 7.: 'Læserat famam suam sub Nerone; credebatur sponte accusasse." On the other hand, he is careful to let his correspondents know that in his own public accusations he was appointed by the senate. *Ep.* vii. 33.

safety that their supremacy should be vindicated, while it was impossible for them to come forward openly and demand protection and satisfaction. Firmly to reject the proffered assistance of the voluntary delator required an amount of self-restraint and self-confidence which few men in such a position could boast; least of all one who was conscious of his own demerits, and of the unpopularity with which he had surrounded himself. With conspirators in the senate, in the forum, in the camp, even in his own household, with a whole people constantly on the watch for the evil auguries of the soothsayers, the most trifling marks of disrespect might cause deep uneasiness, and the means of indirect repression, through the agency of the delator, must be accepted as a necessary weapon of defence.

But the necessity for the use of this fatal weapon grew with its exercise. Domitian seems, of all the emperors, to have carried it furthest, and adopted it most systematically. It was an aggravation rather than an extenuation of his crime that he seduced into his service men of high rank and character, and turned the senate into a mob of rivals for the disgrace of thus basely serving him. The instruments of his jealous precaution rose in a graduated hierarchy. The knights and senators trembled before a Massa Bæbius, a Carus, and a Latinus; but these delators trembled in their turn before the prince of delators, Memmius Regulus, and courted him, not always successfully, by the surrender of their estates or their mistresses. A school of high prerogative lawyers speedily arose to humour the emperor's legal tastes, and to invent a justification for every sentence it might please him to pronounce. Men who thus prostituted their abilities were found liable, as might be expected, to charges of gross irregularity in their own conduct. Thus Palfurius Sura was accused of having descended, being a consular, into the arena, to gratify

Character of the delators.

Nero by wrestling with a female athlete. When, however, Vespasian struck his name from the roll of the senate, he went over to the Stoics, set up for an austere precisian, and a professed opponent of the imperial government.[1] Received back into favour by Domitian, he employed himself as readily in building up the theory of imperial prerogative. The men, indeed, who did this kind of work were sycophants; nevertheless, the work itself was seasonable. It was time that the reality of monarchy should be stripped of its disguises, and no pretence left for the fitful assertion of an impracticable idea of liberty. The long enjoyment of good and temperate government which followed, was probably in a great degree owing to the naked interpretation of imperial power put forth by the crown lawyers of Domitian. But some years of mutual suspicion and misunderstanding were still to be endured by prince and people before this consummation could be reached. The best and noblest of the citizens were still marked out as the prey of delators, whose patron connived at enormities which bound their agents more closely to himself, and made his protection more necessary to them. The haughty nobles quailed in silence under a system in which every act, every word, every sigh was noted against them, and disgrace, exile, and death followed upon secret whispers. The fears of Domitian increased with his severities. He listened to the tales not of senators and consulars only, but of the humblest officials, and even of private soldiers. Often, says Epictetus, was the citizen, sitting in the theatre, entrapped by a disguised legionary beside him, who pretended to murmur against the emperor, till he had led his unsuspecting neighbour to confide to him his own

[1] The story is told by the scholiast on Juvenal, iv. 53.:

"Si quid Palfurio, si credimus Armillato,
Quicquid conspicuum pulcrumque est æquore toto
Res fisci est, ubicunque natat."

complaints, and then skulked away to denounce him.[1]

Favour shown by Domitian to the soldiers.

The government of Domitian leant more and more on the soldiers. Every step he took in tyranny required to be secured by fresh measures of force and cruelty. But the guardians of the imperial tyranny might at any moment become its avengers. It was necessary to divide the officers as well as to unite the soldiers. Hence the jealousy with which the imperator kept his best lieutenants unemployed, or intrusted them only with inferior commands. Hence, perhaps, his practice of dividing the prefecture of the city, the most confidential post in the empire, among as many as twelve colleagues.[2] The legionaries, however, found themselves humoured, indulged, and pampered. Of reducing their number for the sake of economy, there was no further mention. They stalked along the streets as a separate and favoured class, driving the herd of citizens to the right and left with the clang of their boot-heels, and the rattling of their gaudy accoutrements. It concerned the dignity perhaps, and certainly the safety of the emperor, that the bravest of his subjects should seem also the most honoured, and the most fortunate; so that elevated by privileges, as well as ornamental distinctions, above the unarmed denizens of the city, they might share at least with their chief the envy and hatred of the people.[3] To gain the confidence of this class the emperor tore himself repeatedly from the pleasures of the capital, and pretended to share their toils in distant campaigns. In Domitian we seem first to return to that early condition of society to which despotism in civilized states is ever tending, when the chief is

[1] Epictetus, *Dissert.* iv. 13.

[2] This fact is stated by Lydus, *de Magistratibus*, i. 49., ii. 19. Imhof's *Domitianus*, p. 100.

[3] Juvenal, xvi. in fin.: "Ducis hoc referre videtur."

compelled to resume the command of his armies in person, and make himself the actual leader of a horde of organised banditti. The position to which this emperor was first called was accepted with increasing unreserve by his successors. In Rome they solemnized their triumphs; in their Campanian villas they enjoyed brief snatches of repose; but it was on the frontiers more and more that they reaped the laurels which attached the soldiers to their persons, and from the camp that they issued more and more the decrees by which they ruled the world.

Domitian caresses the populace.

Meanwhile the mob of the city demanded its accustomed indulgences more keenly than ever. Domitian lavished on it the old amusements in increased profusion, and invented new. From year to year he squandered his treasures on shows and entertainments. His costly exhibitions displayed with exaggerated features the tasteless extravagance in which the Romans delighted. Gladiators hewed and hacked one another; wild beasts tore their victims; chariots raced and jostled as of old; but the Flavian amphitheatre afforded a wider arena than any former edifice, and the shows appropriated to it were enhanced in grandeur and extent. The citizens shouted with admiration at a sea-fight enacted within the stone enclosure, the vast space beneath them being flooded for the occasion from the tanks or fish-ponds of Nero's gardens.[1] Here, too, women fought with women, or even with men; an army of dwarfs was marshalled in a combat against cranes.[2] Domitian added two colours, the

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 4.; comp. *Tit.* 7. Domitian constructed also a naumachia by the side of the Tiber: ἐν καινῷ τινι χωρίῳ, says Dion lxvii. 8., to distinguish it from that of Augustus.

[2] Stat. *Sylv.* i. 6–53.:

"Stat sexus rudis insciusque ferri,
Et pugnas capit improbus viriles . . . . .
Casuræque vagis grues rapinis
Mirantur pumilos ferociores."

Women fighting in the arena had been seen under Nero. Tac. *Ann.* xv. 32.

purple and the golden, to the four factions of the circus, and increased the number of the chariots that dashed in tumultuous fury round the goal. He courted popularity by the constancy with which he attended these exhibitions, which every citizen of taste and refinement had long pronounced intolerably vulgar; but he preserved his own dignity with more self-respect than some of his predecessors, and though noted for exquisite skill in some manual exercises, he never deigned to exhibit it in public, or purchase applause by personal degradation.[1] Sometimes, indeed, his caprice or imperiousness broke through the restraints of his self-imposed affability. On the occasion of a sudden storm of rain he refused to allow the veil of the amphitheatre to be drawn over the spectators; and once, when the mob of the circus disturbed him by their clamour, he did not scruple to command the herald to call them to silence, a bold breach of etiquette towards the majesty of the people.[2]

Establishment of the Capitoline contests in singing and composition.

While, indeed, the brutal or senseless amusements of fighting and racing still enchained the passions of the populace, a more elevated taste was apparently making way among a large middle class of citizens. The magnates of the city put some check on the extravagance of their luxury, and their clients and dependents began to yearn for intellectual recreations, little known to the earlier generations. The moral triumph of Greece over her conquerors was complete on the day when the Roman emperor deigned to institute quinquennial contests in poetry, eloquence, and music, after the fashion of the graceful games of Hellas, long since naturalized in the Grecian cities of Campania.[3]

[1] Suetonius (*Domit.* 19.) mentions some extraordinary instances of his skill with the bow, which he would sometimes exhibit to select guests in his Alban villa.

[2] Dion, lxvii. 8.; lxix. 6.; τοῦτο δὴ τὸ τοῦ Δομετιανοῦ, σιωπήσατε.

[3] Suet. *Domit.* 4. Sturdy Romans still continued to protest against these Hellenic corruptions, and even, when they could, to put them down. When Rufinus abolished the Gymnic Games at Vienna,

But Domitian was an antiquarian, and he required a precedent. He discovered that on the first rebuilding of the Capitol by Camillus, the senate had directed their preserver to institute dramatic shows, in which the taking of Veii held a prominent place.[1] Fortified by this authority, Domitian celebrated his own restoration of the national temple with games on the Grecian model, such as Nero had exhibited with some reserve in his private circus, in the most public manner, and on a scale of unusual magnificence. On the summit of the Capitoline hill, in the face of men and gods, the compositions of the rival candidates, both in Greek and Latin, were recited, and the victors crowned with oak-leaves in gilded metal.[2] The subjects of these pieces were various, but we may believe that they turned for the most part on the praise of the emperor himself, and served, more or less directly, for his glorification, as a warrior, a poet, a ruler, or a demigod.[3] The connexion between the founder of the prize and the god in whose honour it was founded was touched, no doubt, more or less delicately by every competitor.[4] The favourite poets and orators of the day contended eagerly for these distinctions, and lamented, when they failed of success, the harshness or ingratitude of the patron deity.[5] The transformation of Italian Rome into a Grecian city by the

Junius Mauricus exclaimed in the Senate, "Vellem etiam Romæ tolli possent!" Plin. *Ep.* iv. 22.

[1] Liv. v. 50. (A. U. C. 389); Festus, p. 322.

[2] Censorin. *de Die Nat.* 18. (A. U. C. 839, A.D. 86, Eckhel, vi. 381.); Stat. *Sylv.* iii. 5.: "Sanctoque indutum Cæsaris auro." Martial, iv. 1. 6.: "Perque manus tantas plurima quercus eat."

[3] Plin. *Paneg.* 54.: "Et quis jam locus miseræ adulationis manebat ignarus, cum laudes imperatorum ludis etiam et comissationibus celebrarentur, saltarentur, atque in omne ludibrium effeminatis vocibus, modis, gestibus frangerentur?"

[4] Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* iii. 7. 4.

[5] Stat. *Sylv.* iii. 5. 37.: "Tu cum Capitolia nostræ
Inficiata lyræ, sævum ingratumque dolebas
Mecum victa Jovem."

architects of Nero was crowned by this truly Grecian solemnity, which seems to have taken root in the habits and tastes of the people, and exercised, no doubt, great influence upon them. The periodical contests of the *Agon Capitolinus* (for even the name they bore was Greek) continued without interruption down to the fifth century, the solemn consecration to the Muses of a spot known for so many ages only as the stronghold of national force, sank deep into the minds of successive generations. The temple and the citadel have vanished in storm and fire, and even their sites have become the battlefield of antiquaries; but it was on the Capitoline hill that the song of Petrarch was crowned in history, and the song of Corinna in romance.

Assumes M his patrone d institute n her at his Alban villa.

At the Capitoline games Domitian presided in person, in the Grecian costume, which it had hitherto been deemed disgraceful for a Roman to assume in Rome, wearing also on his head a new-fangled coronet of gold adorned with figures of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva; the flamens of Jupiter, who sat by his side, bore on their own fillets the image of the emperor. The first of the Cæsars had chosen his ancestress Venus for his patron divinity; Augustus had placed himself under the protection of Apollo; Domitian affected to believe that he was the special favourite of Minerva.[1] He founded annual contests in her honour at his Alban

v. 3. 232.: "Et fugit speratus honos, cum lustra parentis
Invida Tarpeii canerem."

Posterity has avenged the defeated competitor by preserving so large a portion of his verses, while it has let even the names of his rivals perish. Imhof supposes, not unreasonably, that he was distanced, not in poetry, but in adulation.

[1] Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* x. 1. 91.: "Familiare numen Minervæ." *Suet. Domit.* 15. Statius and Martial, *passim.* In token of his devotion to this goddess Domitian is said to have demanded to be chosen Archon of Athens. Philostr. *Vit. Apoll.* viii. 16. He assumed her effigy on his medals from the year 833. Eckhel, vi. 375. Philostratus affirms that he pretended to be her son.

villa, and in these, too, he combined poetry and rhetoric with musical and gymnic exhibitions. Statius, who failed of the prize on the Capitol, was thrice crowned at Alba; but he seems to have held the olive chaplet of the goddess which he gained in less estimation than the oaken wreath of Jupiter which was denied him.[1] Domitian's vanity was better employed when it led him to bestow his regards, however cold and stately, on men of letters; when he conferred on the learned and virtuous Quintilian the ornaments of the consulship, and made him tutor to his youthful kinsmen; when he encouraged, with his applause and at least with some trifling recognition of more substantial value, the genius of Statius and Martial. Men of still higher character or position, such as Tacitus and Pliny, owed to his discerning patronage their early advancement in public life; though they and others might pretend at a later period to have shrunk from a protection which demanded unworthy adulation. True it is, perhaps, that no business, however trifling, was transacted in the senate without the preface of a fulsome eulogy on the prince.[2] The emperor's tame lion, or mutilated valet, was celebrated with no less fervid eloquence than a victory over the foes of the republic.[3] The repair of twenty miles of pavement on the branch road of the Appia to Puteoli, was made the subject of an extended panegyric, while the Flavian amphitheatre, the immortal work of Vespasian and Titus, to which Domitian had only set the coping stones, extorted from the courtliest of

His patronage of men of letters:- Quintilian, Statius, Martial, Tacitus, and Pliny the younger.

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 4.; Stat. *Sylv.* iii. 2. 28.: "Ter me nitidis Albana ferentem Serta comis."

[2] Plin. *Paneg.* 34.: "Nihil tam vulgare tam parvum in Senatu agebatur, ut non laudibus principum immorarentur quibuscunque censendi necessitas incidisset."

[3] Stat. *Sylv.* ii. 5.: "Leo mansuetus Imperatoris;" iii. 4.: "Coma Earini."

his poets the tribute of but one or two short epigrams.[1] Domitian's dubious successes in the field furnished a theme for many sounding hyperboles.[2] But the men of letters reserved, as might be expected, their most laboured encomiums for the verses or speeches to which their princely patron himself gave utterance. *To him*, says Silius, *the Muses shall themselves bring offerings, and Phœbus shall marvel at a song more potent than that which stayed the Hebrus, and up-rooted Rhodope.*[3]

Repaid by the flattery of the poets.

Such were the inordinate compliments which could please the ears of a son of the homely Vespasian, when, conscious of the hatred of his senators, he could

[1] Stat. *Sylv.* iv. 3.: "Via Domitiana." Martial, *De Spectac.* 1. 2.

[2] Martial, ii. 2., v. 19., vii. 1–8.; Sil. Ital. iii. 608.; Stat. *Sylv. ll. cc.*, *Theb.* i. 19.:

"Bisque jugo Rhenum, bis adactum legibus Istrum,
Et conjurato dejectos vertice Dacos."

[3] Sil. Ital. iii. 618.:

"Quin et Romuleos superabit voce nepotes
Quis erit eloquio partum decus: huic sua Musæ
Sacra ferent; meliorque lyra cui substitit Hebrus
Et venit Rhodope, Phœbo miranda loquetur."

Comp. Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* x. i. 91.: "Hos nominavimus quia Germanicum Augustum ab institutis studiis deflexit cura terrarum, parumque Dis visum est esse eum maximum poetarum," &c. Valerius Flaccus specifies a poem by Domitian on the war in Judea (*Argon.* i. 12.): "Versam proles tua pandat Idumen, Namque potest;" and some modern critics ascribe to him, I think erroneously, the translation of Aratus, which goes under the name of Germanicus Cæsar. Quintilian, in the preface to *Inst. Orat.* iv., flatters him for his accomplishments as an orator, and even Suetonius admits them to some extent. It is difficult to say how far Domitian deserves to be regarded as a patron of literature. The seventh satire of Juvenal, beginning, "Et spes et ratio studiorum in Cæsare tantum," is probably of a later date. Suetonius speaks in the most disparaging terms of his personal acquirements, which are so highly lauded by the authorities above cited. He allows, however, that he bestowed pains and expense in restoring the treasures of the great libraries destroyed at Rome by fire: "Exemplaribus undique petitis missisque Alexandriam qui describerent emendarentque." *Domit.* 20. His favours to Statius and Martial seem to have been but slender. Tacitus only allows that he pretended to love letters and poetry. *Hist.* iv. in fin.

no longer soothe his apprehensions by the vows of loyalty extorted from them. The poor poets could cause him no anxiety. He need not read their blessings backwards, and interpret their notes of admiration into disguised tokens of disgust. To them he could allow unlimited licence to brand the memory of Nero, to sound the praises of Lucan, who had plotted against a tyrant, and of Thrasea, whom a tyrant had sacrificed, neglecting in their favour the common interest of tyrants to protect the memory of one another.[1] Even in the last moments of his own tyranny he clung tenaciously to flatteries such as had hardly been lavished on the opening promise of his predecessor. On the kalends of January 95, the fifteenth year of his reign, when he entered on his seventeenth consulship, a period when all the worst features of his character had been brought into full relief by the terrors of the Antonian conspiracy, he could allow the humble courtier Statius to paint in glowing colours the greetings of the god Janus, the patron of Roman chronology. *Hail, great father of the world, about to inaugurate with me the ages! Behold the fresh splendour of our temples! Behold the aspiring flames of our festal fires! on thee the constellations of my winter rain a genial warmth! . . . . . Augustus bore the fasces thirteen times; but it was in his latter years that he first began to deserve them. Thou, still in thy youth, hast already transcended thy ancestors. A thousand trophies shalt thou gain; only*

[1] Statius, *Sylv.* ii. 7. 100.:

"Sic et tu, rabidi nefas tyranni,
Jussus præcipitem subire lethem."

Martial, vii. 21.: "Heu! Nero crudelis nullaque invisior umbra."
i. 9.: "Magni Thraseæ consummatique Catonis."

The praises of Cato had been tolerated by Augustus, but Pompeius and the whole "Pharsalian crowd" receive their apotheosis from Statius:

"Qua Pharsalia turba congregatur;
Et te nobile carmen insonantem
Pompeii comitantur et Catones."

permit them to be triumphs! Yet remaineth Bactria to be conquered: yet remaineth Babylon. No Indian laurel has yet been laid in the lap of Jupiter: the Arabs, the Seres kneel not yet in supplication. All the year hath not yet its full honours. Ten months still wait impatient to be designated by thy titles.[1]

Domitian's moodiness and dissimulation.

Nero had his social hours, and the temper to enjoy them. His smile was attractive; he could flatter and charm; he had companions and favourites, possibly friends and lovers. But the genius of Domitian was always solitary and morose; he seems to have had no personal intimacies; his humour, when he chose to unbend, was caustic and saturnine. Shrewd enough to take an accurate measure of the sycophants around him, he enjoyed a grim satisfaction in playing on their fears. If you only talked with him on the state of the weather, your life was at stake, says the satirist, and you felt that it was at stake.[2] In the depth of his dissimulation he was an imitator of Tiberius, whom he professed to make his model both in his measures and his demeanour; but the amusement he derived from dissembling with his victims was all his own. Of the feats he performed in disguising his cruel intentions from the wretches he was about to sacrifice, some ghastly stories were circulated, which suffice at least to show the estimate commonly formed of him.[3]

The council of "the Turbot" described by Juvenal.

The incident about to be related is not to be regarded as a myth invented in later times to realize the popular idea of Domitian's moody humour. Though narrated by a professed satirist, we are expressly told to consider

[1] Statius, *Sylv.* iv. 1. These warlike aspirations are very like those at the beginning of Lucan's poem; but there they are addressed to Rome and the citizens, here to the emperor alone.

[2] Juvenal, iv. 87.:

> "Cum quo de pluviis aut æstibus aut nimboso
> Vere locuturi fatum pendebat amici."

[3] Suet. *Domit.* 11.; Plin. *Paneg.* 66.: "Quod tam infidum mare quam blanditiæ principum illorum?" etc.

it as a veritable history, and we are bound, I think, to accept it as at least true in the main. If indeed we admit the accuracy of every particular, it presents internal evidence of having occurred not later than the early winter of the year 84, the fourth of the tyrant's reign; and as it shows the insolence of Domitian rather than his barbarity, the meek subservience of his attendants rather than their abject terror, it may appear to represent one of the earlier scenes of his career.[1] About the end, then, of the year 84, the members of the imperial council, the select associates and advisers,—not the favourites, we are reminded, of the prince, but rather the especial objects of his hate, and pale as all might see, from the anxiety ever present to those who were most in contact with him,—were suddenly required to repair in haste to their master.[2] They were, it seems, eleven in number, and in twice or thrice as many verses their crimes or virtues are succinctly traced for us with a pen of cynical sincerity. One after another pass before us, Pegasus the prefect—say rather, the bailiff—of the city; for what is Rome but the emperor's farm, and the prefect of Rome, but his manciple?[3]—Fuscus, brave and voluptuous, soon to leave his limbs a prey

[1] Juvenal, iv. 35.: "Res vera agitur." Assuming, as I say, the accuracy of details, the date may be fixed by the introduction of Fuscus into the scene, who was killed in Dacia in the campaign of 85, or at least quitted Rome for the frontiers in the spring of that year. But the incident took place, "jam cedente pruinis Auctumno," *i.e.* at the beginning of winter; not later, therefore, than November 84. It might be argued, perhaps, from the allusion to Britain as not yet pacified, that it was before the conclusion of Agricola's warfare, and accordingly a year, or even two years, earlier.

[2] Juvenal, iv. 72.: "Quos oderat ille." Comp. Tacitus (*Hist.* iv 8.) of a confidant of Nero, who confesses: "Non minus sibi anxiam talem amicitiam quam aliis exilium."

[3] From the scholiast on Juv. iv. 76., and from some notices in the *Corpus Jur. Civil.*, we learn that Pegasus, the freedman of Domitian or Vespasian, obtained the consulship, and gave his name to certain edicts of the senate. He seems, even by the satirist's admission, to have been a respectable man.

to the Dacian vultures[1];—Crispus, a mild and genial grey-beard, who has long owed his life to the meekness with which he has yielded to the current, and shrunk from the vain assertion of independence[2];—the Glabrios, father and son, of whom the elder slunk through an inglorious existence in pusillanimous security, the younger was doomed to perish innocently, condemned to fight with beasts in the arena[3];—the blind Catullus, deadliest of delators, with whom Domitian, as with a blind and aimless weapon, aimed at his destined victims[4];—to these were added the sly Veiento, the fat old sycophant, Montanus, Crispinus redolent with the perfumes of his native East, the vile spy Pompeius who slit men's throats with a whisper, and Rubrius the perpetrator of some crime too bad, it seems, to be specified even in that day of evil deeds and shameless scandals.

Such were the men who now hurried in the darkness along the Appian Way, and met at midnight in the vestibule of the imperial villa, or the tyrant's fortress, which crowned the long slope of the ascent to Alba.[5] Anxiously they asked each other, *What*

[1] Juv. iv. 112.:—

> "Et qui vulturibus servabat viscera Dacis
> Fuscus, marmorea meditatus prælia villa."

[2] Juv. iv. 81. Quintilian has some favourable allusions to this man's wit and temper.

[3] Juvenal, iv. 94. foll. The younger Acilius Glabrio has been mentioned before. Juvenal insinuates that his descent into the arena was a feint to make himself despicable, and so protect himself from the emperor's jealousy, and is compared to the simulated folly of Brutus.

[4] Of Messalinus Catullus see Plin. *Ep.* iv. 22.: "Qui luminibus orbatus ingenio sævo mala cæcitatis addiderat; non venerabatur, non erubescebat, non moderabatur; qui sæpius Domitiano, non secus ac tela, quæ et ipsa cæca et improvida ferantur, in optimum quemque contorquebatur."

[5] Juvenal, iv. 145.: "Quos Albanam dux magnus in arcem Traxerat." The site of this villa, which belonged originally to Pompeius, and became a favourite residence of the emperors, may

news? What the purport of their unexpected summons? What foes of Rome had broken the prince's slumbers,—the Chatti or the Sicambri, the Britons or the Dacians? While they were yet waiting for admission, the menials of the palace entered, bearing aloft a huge turbot, a present to the emperor, which they had the mortification of seeing introduced into his presence, while the doors were still shut against themselves. A humble fisherman of the Upper coast had found the monster stranded on the beach, beneath the fane of Venus at Ancona, and had hurried with his prize across the Apennines, to receive a reward for so rare an offering to the imperial table. When at last the councillors were admitted, the question reserved for their deliberations was no other than this, whether the big fish should be cut in pieces, or served up whole on some enormous platter, constructed in its honour. The cabinet was no doubt sensibly persuaded that the question allowed at least of no delay, and with due expressions of surprise and admiration voted the dish, and set the potter's wheel in motion. Such is the outline of a story which Juvenal has embellished with his happiest sallies, abounding with illustrations of character and manners. Could we believe in its literal truth, we might regard it perhaps as the most curious domestic anecdote of antiquity; but if it be no more than a sport of wit, and a bold satirical invention, it still has its value as a lively representation of the genius of the times.[1]

still be traced on the slope of the hill covered by the modern Albano, about fourteen miles from Rome. A detachment of prætorians was quartered in the vicinity, whence the term arx applied to the palace itself.

[1] The reader will remember the "Minerva's shield" of Vitellius, and suspect perhaps that this story, notwithstanding the mock gravity of the author's disclaimer, is fancifully combined from the tradition of the one emperor's gluttony, and the grim humour of the other.

There was a time when Domitian might be satisfied with indulging his cynical contempt for his creatures by merely vexing and humiliating them. As he advanced in his career of tyranny he required the more pungent gratification of overwhelming them with terror. Such an anecdote is preserved by Dion, and the narrative of the historian forms a fitting pendant to that of the satirist. *Having once made a great feast for the citizens, he proposed,* we read, *to follow it up with an entertainment to a select number of the highest nobility. He fitted up an apartment all in black. The ceiling was black, the walls were black, the pavement was black, and upon it were ranged rows of bare stone seats, black also. The guests were introduced at night without their attendants, and each might see at the head of his couch a column placed, like a tombstone, on which his own name was graven, with the cresset lamp above it, such as is suspended in the tombs. Presently there entered a troop of naked boys, blackened, who danced around with horrid movements, and then stood still before them, offering them the fragments of food which are commonly presented to the dead. The guests were paralysed with terror, expecting at every moment to be put to death; and the more, as the others maintained a deep silence, as though they were dead themselves, and Domitian spake of things pertaining to the state of the departed only.* But this funereal feast was not destined to end tragically. Cæsar happened to be in a sportive mood, and when he had sufficiently enjoyed his jest, and had sent his visitors home expecting worse to follow, he bade each be presented with the silver cup and platter on which his dismal supper had been served, and with the slave, now neatly washed and apparelled, who had waited upon him. Such, said the populace, was the way in which it pleased the emperor to solemnize the

The funereal banquet described by Dion.

funereal banquet of the victims of his defeats in Dacia, and of his persecutions in the city.[1]

Indignation of the Romans at the emperor's mockery.

Such graceless buffoonery in a public man offended Roman dignity to a degree we can scarcely estimate. It was no empty truism, no vapid moralizing on the part of the poet, when he broke off abruptly in the midst of his comic relation, to exclaim with passionate indignation: *Better all these follies — better that he had spent in this despicable child's play all the hours he gave to the slaughter of Rome's noblest offspring, unpunished and unrequited.* And so he seems to clench his fist and grind his teeth at the *bald-pate Nero*, and hails his destined fall, when at last he shall have made himself a terror, not to his nobles only, but to the slaves of his own household. But at this period the best blood of Rome had trickled under his hand in a few intermittent drops only, *like the first of a thunder shower.* It was not till after the Antonian conspiracy that the stream began to flow in a copious and unceasing torrent, and the signal for the outburst was, perhaps, the death of the bravest of the Romans, the man of whom Domitian stood most in awe, whose removal might seem the most necessary for the secure exercise of his cruelty.[2]

Death of Agricola, A. D. 93, A. U. 846, and rumour of poison.

Since his recall from Britain, the conqueror of Galgacus had been content with the modest dignity of a private station, in which he enjoyed the respect of all good men, and might feel that of all the chiefs of the armies there was none to whom, had the prince's jealousy allowed it, the contest with the Dacians and Sarmatians might so confidently be entrusted. But Domitian had plainly intimated that he dared not

[1] Dion, lxvii. 9. From this allusion, and from the mention of the feast given to the citizens, we may fix this incident to the period of Domitian's Dacian triumph, A. D. 91.

[2] Tac. *Agric.* 43.

again employ him, and Agricola had discreetly refrained from soliciting employment. If he was named for an important government, it was with the understanding that he should himself decline it; but the emperor took what was deemed a base advantage of his moderation, in withholding the salary of the office, which, it seems, ought in fairness to have been pressed upon him. Domitian knew that he had now openly mortified a gallant and popular officer, and he began to hate the man he had injured. Such, as Tacitus reminds us, is a common infirmity of our nature; but Domitian's temper, he adds, was prone to take offence, and the more he dissembled the more was he implacable. Yet even his morose and sullen humour was soothed by the prudence and reserve of Agricola, who abstained from provoking his own fate by a vain pretence of free-mouthed patriotism. Thus he continued to live in the eyes of prince and people down to the year 93, the ninth from his return to Rome; but on his death, which occurred at that critical period, the rumour spread that he had been cut off by poison. *For myself*, adds his biographer, *I know nothing, and can affirm nothing. This, however, I can say, that throughout his last illness the emperor's own freedmen, the emperor's own physicians, were constant in their visits and inquiries, more constant than courtly etiquette might warrant, whether it were from anxiety or from curiosity only. The day he died his last moments were watched, and every symptom reported by set couriers, and none could believe that the emperor would take such pains to get the first intimation of an event he really deprecated. Nevertheless, he assumed all the outward signs of grief, though reckless by this time of popular hatred; for it was easier to Domitian to dissemble his joy over a dead enemy than his fear of a living one.* *Thus much, at least, was ascertained, that on reading Agricola's will, in*

which he found himself appointed coheir with the wife and daughter, he openly avowed his satisfaction at the honour done him, and at the esteem, as he supposed, thus manifested towards him. So blind was he, so corrupted by constant flattery, as not to know that a virtuous prince is never chosen for his heir by a virtuous parent.[1]

Considerations on the imputation of poisoning to Domitian.

We have been too much accustomed to the unproved insinuations of foul play advanced by Tacitus against the enemies of his order to expect from him any corroboration for charges thus brandished in the face of the tormenter of the senate. We can only regard them as a manifesto of defiance, delivered indeed long after the tyrant's fall, and addressed to an audience that welcomed every censure, and applauded every surmise against him. Yet, there is a fair presumption against a despot to whom such crimes could be popularly imputed. Domitian was surely not incapable of poisoning Agricola. . The death of the old commander, it may be added, was singularly opportune to the emperor. The biographer, indeed, has told us in memorable language, that the sufferer himself was fortunate not only in the brilliancy of his life, but in the seasonableness of his decease. *Agricola,* he exclaims, in the long organ peals of his sounding peroration, *Agricola saw not the curia besieged, and the senate surrounded by armed men, and the slaughter of so many consulars, the flight or exile of so many noble women from one fatal proscription.* Hitherto, he assures us, the delators, such as Carus and Catullus, exercised their hideous trade in the secret chambers of the palace. Not till after Agricola's death did they venture to denounce the good, the noble, the wise, in public, and incited senators to lay

[1] Tac. *Agric.* 43. Agricola died August 23, A. D. 93 (A. U. 846), at the age of fifty-six. *Agric.* p. 44. Dion accepts the rumour propagated by Tacitus, and ascribes his death without hesitation to poison.

hands on senators, prætorians on consulars.[1] It was opportune for Domitian that at the opening of this sanguinary career, at the moment when his terrors had been frenzied by the outbreak of the Antonian conspiracy, and his only safety seemed to lie in the swift extermination of the highest and the noblest, the man whom of all others he might have thought most formidable, should be suddenly and unexpectedly removed. Had Agricola lived, would Domitian have dared to inaugurate his reign of terror? Had Domitian given the rein to his savage cruelty, would not the senate have called on Agricola to deliver it?

Proscription of the best and noblest of the senators, A. D. 93.

Such considerations may still make us hesitate to absolve Domitian from the crime of assassination. On the other hand, we must observe that the language, both of Tacitus and Pliny, points to this epoch as the commencement of a new era of blood, and leaves us under the impression that hitherto the despot's tyranny had been exhibited in only occasional excesses. It was in the year 93 that Pliny filled the office of prætor; but he did not succeed to the consulship till a later period, and under a new and more auspicious reign. Hitherto, as he tells us, he had consented to be advanced in his public career by the arch dissembler, whose wickedness he had not fully fathomed; but now, when Domitian threw off the mask, and openly *professed a hatred of all good men*, the virtuous aspirant at once stopped short.[2] But the death of Agricola was, as it were, the signal for the

[1] Tac. *Agric.* 45.: "Mox nostræ duxere Helvidium in carcerem manus." Comp. Plin. *Ep.* ix. 13.: "Inter multa scelera multorum nullum atrocius videbatur quam quod in senatu senator senatori, prætorius consulari, reo judex manus intulisset."

[2] Plin. *Paneg.* 95.: "Cursu quondam provectus ab illo insidiosissimo principe, antequam profiteretur odium bonorum; postquam professus est, substiti." But, in *Ep.* iii. 11., he says that he was prætor in the year in which the philosophers were banished (the second time, A. D. 93 extr.), and Helvidius and others put to death. Up to this year then Pliny at least would have us believe that Domitian's conduct had not been flagrantly tyrannical.

proscription of the most eminent senators, precisely those most closely connected in blood and feeling with Thrasea the victim of Nero, and Helvidius, the victim of Vespasian. Upon them and others the fury of the delators was let loose, and charges, on grounds for the most part absurdly frivolous, were advanced in the senate. Arulenus Rusticus and Senecio were thus hunted to death for writing in praise of these noble Stoics; a son of Helvidius for appearing to reflect on Domitian's conjugal infidelities; Maternus for the crime of declaiming against tyrants; Cocceianus suffered for having kept the birthday of his kinsman, the Emperor Otho; Pomponianus on the still more trifling pretext that he set up in his house a map of the world, and compiled a volume of royal speeches from the history of Livy; Lucullus, formerly prefect in Britain, perished for giving to a newly-invented javelin the name of Lucullean. And lastly, to close the gloomy list, which might be still further extended even from our imperfect records, Flavius Sabinus, the emperor's cousin, suffered ostensibly on no graver charge than the mistake of a herald in styling him imperator instead of consul. Meanwhile Juventius Celsus, who had actually conspired against Domitian, was allowed to live, on his undertaking to make important disclosures, which he postponed on various pretexts, till the emperor's death relieved him from his pledge.[1]

Second edict against the philosophers, A. D. 94.

The death of Agricola was also followed by the second and more stringent edict against the philosophers, a persecution which we cannot fail to connect with the judicial murder of the Stoics in the senate, the connexions of Thrasea and Helvidius. Domitian had grounds, no

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 10.; Dion, lxvii. 13. Sabinus, it will be remembered, was the husband of Julia, and Domitian had long regarded him with jealousy, as affecting imperial airs: "Indigne ferens albatos et ipsum ministros habere, proclamavit, οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη." Suet. c. 12.

doubt, to apprehend an understanding between the indignant statesmen of the curia and the professors of wisdom and virtue in the schools. Both held the same language and used the same watchwords; both appealed to the same principles and the same living examples; whether the Stoic declaimed his high political doctrines from the benches of the assembly, or whether he fled from public business and murmured his discontent in the shades of domestic privacy, he was equally an object of suspicion to the tyrant, who feared open hostility in the one case, and covert intrigue in the other. While, however, the politicians were put cruelly to death, the rhetoricians seem to have been treated with some mildness. If we may believe indeed their own complaints, they were driven to the wildest recesses of the empire, to the shores of Gaul, the sands of Libya, and the steppes of Scythia. But Artemidorus, son-in-law of Musonius, was removed, as Pliny himself informs us, no further than to a suburban villa, while many teachers of philosophy, on throwing off their gowns, were suffered to abide unmolested in the city. Demetrius was able to conceal himself within the limits of Italy; nor is it clear that Dion Chrysostomus was actually relegated to the Ister, to which he wandered in his restless migration.[1] Epictetus set up his professorial chair at Nicopolis in Epirus. Apollonius of Tyana, who had been convicted of treasonable machinations early in Domitian's reign, had been allowed to settle in the eastern provinces, and was still haranguing, agitating, and possibly conspiring in the pleasant retreat of Ephesus.

Reign of terror, and last months of Domitian, A. D. 95.

Another, and yet another year of terrors and persecutions followed, till the jealousies of Domitian were crowned by the measures already noticed against the Jews or Christians. The murder of Flavius Clemens was the

[1] Philostr. *Vit. Apoll.* vii. 4. 10.; *Vit. Sophist.* i. 7.

last, and perhaps the worst, of the atrocities of this reign. But committed as he now was to a struggle for life against all that was virtuous and honest among men, Domitian seems to have felt at last that the time for intrigue or dissimulation in crime was past, and his increasing barbarity did not scruple to evince its pleasure in the actual sight of the suffering it inflicted. Even Nero, it was said, had shrunk from witnessing the torments of his victims, but Domitian came in person into the senate-house to watch the agonies of the accused and the suspected; he personally interrogated them when arrested, holding their chains in his hands for his own security, while the natural redness of his countenance might equally disguise the glow of shame, or the coolness of utter shamelessness.[1] If, indeed, his victims' pains could be compensated by those of their persecutor, they had ample revenge in the fears that haunted and maddened him. The dissimulation he had practised towards them was a tribute to the terrors they continued to inflict on him. Like his master in statecraft, he affected to cast on the senate the odium of his most hateful sentences, and sometimes even courted popularity by pretending to relax the penalties his over-zealous counsellors had recommended.[2] But the very adulation of the senators became to him a source of solicitude from the general disgust it inspired. Accordingly, he declined with nervous eagerness the honours they continued

[1] Tac. *Agric.* 45.: "Nero tamen subtraxit oculos, jussitque scelera non spectavit" It was only the injury to Roman nobles that, in the view of Tacitus, deserved the name of "scelera," atrocities. He does not represent Nero as withdrawing from the sight of more vulgar sufferings. Comp. the expression which follows: "Sævus ille vultus et rubor quo se contra pudorem muniebat," with Suet. *Domit.* 18.: "Commendari se verecundia oris sentiebat." The redness was natural, not factitious. For the other circumstances mentioned in the text see Dion, lxvii. 12.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 11. On such occasions he would say: "Intelligent me omnes senatui interfuisse."

to press on him, and he fretfully disclaimed the invidious pomp of a guard of knights. Old traditions of self-respect might still linger even in the second order of citizens, and disgust them with an act of bodily service. The imperator led the Romans in the field, but the prince was still only first among his peers in the city.[1] Yet neither among the senators nor the knights was there spirit enough to refrain from the most loathsome excesses of servility; still less did either order now raise a hand against the tyrant who reigned over them. They beheld without resistance the most honoured of their fellow-citizens sacrificed for the crime of praising the illustrious dead; they beheld their writings consumed in the forum, and the voice of the Roman people, the liberty of the Roman senate, stifled, as it were, on the funereal pyre; they showed, as Tacitus, himself not the least patient among them, says, a remarkable example of patience, and carried subservience to its utmost limits, as their ancestors had carried independence.[2] Instead of concerting the honourable antagonism of a Galba or a Vespasian in the camps, they left it to the freedmen of the imperial household to organize assassination in the palace. Domitian, red with the blood of the Lamiæ, reeking from the slaughter of the noblest of the citizens, fell at last by the blow of a miscreant's

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 14. When Honorius entered Rome, at the close of the fourth century, his moderation was remarked in not suffering the senators to walk before him. The emperor had gained a victory, and the senate were willing perhaps to treat his appearance among them as a triumph, in which case such deference would not have been irregular. But he recalled them to a juster sense of the circumstances, and of the real traditions of the state. Claudian somewhat enhances his merit by still treating his entry as triumphal: *vi. Cons. Honor.* 549.:

"Moderataque laudant
Tempora, quod clemens aditu, quod pectore, *solus*
Romanos vetuit *currum* præcedere Patres."

[2] Tac. *Agric.* 2.

dagger, when he had made himself formidable to his own menials.[1]

Danger and alarm of Domitian. A. D. 96. A. U. 849.

In the fifteenth year of his protracted principate, Domitian had arrested the prefects of the palace and of the guard, and could no longer rely on those most closely attached to his personal service. He could now hold power only by redoubled terror, and by the suddenness of his blows. It was to overwhelm and paralyse the intriguer in his own household that he now required the head of Epaphroditus, the freedman who had assisted Nero in his suicide.[2] This man had been banished years before for the crime of killing Cæsar, even at Cæsar's own request. Domitian would cut off all hope of life even in exile from the wretch who should lay hands on the sacred person. But the sacrifice was unavailing.

Prodigies and omens.

He could now free himself neither from men nor from the gods; neither from the sword nor the elements. Day and night he was shaken by strange fears. Evil omens and prodigies multiplied. The Chaldæans were impotent to console him. The gods by visions and miracles had inaugurated the Flavian dynasty: the gods, as the worst and weakest of the race might well believe, were now manifestly departing from the Flavian house. It was said, and it may have been said truly, that during the last eight months of Domitian's reign there was unusual stir in the atmosphere. Never since the days preceding the first Cæsar's fall had thunderstorms been so frequent or appalling. The Capitol was *struck from heaven.* The Flavian temple had been scarred by lightning; the bolts which fastened the emperor's golden statue

[1] Juvenal, iv. ult. The allusion to the Lamiæ refers to the death of Ælius Lamia, who indeed may have perished earlier, as the complaint against him was a sarcasm he uttered on Domitian's taking his wife from him, which occurred early in the reign of Vespasian. Suet. *Domit.* 10.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 14.; Dion, lxvii. 14.

on the arch of triumph were torn from their sockets. Of the three great deities, the august assessors in the Capitol, Minerva was regarded by Domitian as his special patroness. Her image stood by his bedside: his customary oath was by her divinity. But now a dream apprised him that the guardian of his person was disarmed by the guardian of the empire, and that Jupiter had forbidden his daughter to protect her favourite any longer. Scared by these accumulated horrors he lost all self-control, and petulantly cried, and the cry was itself a portent: *Now strike Jove whom he will!*[1] From supernatural terrors he reverted again and again to earthly fears and suspicions. Henceforward the tyrant allowed none to be admitted to his presence without being previously searched; and he caused the ends of the corridor in which he took exercise to be lined with polished marble, to reflect the image of any one behind him.[2] At the same time he inquired anxiously into the horoscope of every chief whom he might fear as a possible rival or successor. Many, it was said, he caused to be slain on the intimations thus conveyed to him of supposed danger. Cocceius Nerva, the senator who actually succeeded him, was only suffered to live because, though the presage of his destiny might excite alarm, Domitian was assured by an astrologer, in whom he specially confided, that he was doomed to die very shortly.[3] Nerva's career was indeed brief, but Domitian's proved still briefer. On the other hand, the prince's enemies were equally busy. The battle of the horoscopes raged without and within the palace. Everyone who hated and feared the tyrant, everyone who hoped to leap into his place, consulted the secrets of futurity. The ruler was really in danger

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 15.; Dion, lxvii. 16.

[2] Suet. *Domit.* 14.: "Parietes lapide phengite distinxit." For the phengites (ἀπὸ τοῦ φέγγους), see Plin. *Hist. Nat.* xxxvi. 22.

[3] Dion, lxvii. 15.

when hundreds, perhaps thousands, of his subjects were asking how long he was to live. One inquirer who imprudently announced, on the German frontier, the moment when Domitian should perish (a prophecy which was in fact punctually fulfilled), was sent in chains to Rome, interrogated, and sentenced. At the last moment the tyrant's death saved him, and he was even rewarded with a present from the successor. Another, it seems, had uttered a similar prediction still earlier. Being arrested and questioned, he had sought to confirm the assurance of his prophetic powers by declaring that he was destined himself to be shortly torn in pieces by dogs. To falsify this prognostication the criminal was committed to the flames; but the rains descended and extinguished them, and the dogs after all devoured his body as it lay among the half-burnt faggots.[1]

Apprehensions of Domitian succeeded by fatal security.

This dismal incident was related to Domitian at supper. The victim of superstition had long since, it was said, penetrated futurity, and ascertained too surely the year, the day, the hour which was to prove fatal to him. He had learnt too that he was to die by the sword. Vespasian himself, it was affirmed, not less addicted to the diviner's art in his own and his children's interests, had ascertained the precise destiny which awaited his son, and once, when the young Domitian expressed apprehension of some mushrooms at table, had told him that he need not fear, for he was doomed to perish by steel not by poison. The omens were now closing about the victim, and his terrors became more importunate and overwhelming. *Something,* he exclaimed, *is about to happen, which men shall talk of all the world over!* Drawing a drop of blood from a pimple on his forehead, *May this be all!* he added. He had fixed on the fifth hour of that very day as the direful

[1] Suet. Dion, *ll. cc.*

period. His attendants, to reassure him, declared that the hour had passed. Embracing the flattering tale with alacrity, and rushing at once to the extreme of confidence, he announced that the danger was over, and that he would bathe and dress for the evening repast.[1] But the danger was just then ripening within the walls of the palace. The mysteries there enacted few, indeed, could penetrate, and the account of Domitian's fall has been coloured by invention and fancy. The story that a child, whom he suffered to attend in his private chamber, found by chance the tablets which he placed under his pillow, and that the empress, on inspecting them, and finding herself, with his most familiar servants, designated for execution, contrived a plot for his assassination, is one so often repeated as to cause great suspicion. But neither can we accept the version of Philostratus, who would have us believe that the murder of Domitian was the deed of a single traitor, a freedman of Clemens, named Stephanus, who, indignant at his patron's death, and urged to fury by the sentence on his patron's wife, Domitilla, rushed alone into the tyrant's chamber, diverted his attention by a frivolous pretence, and smote him with the sword he bore concealed in his sleeve. It is more likely that the design, however it originated, was common to several of the household, and that means were taken among them to disarm the victim and baffle his cries for assistance. Stephanus, who is said to have excelled in personal strength, may have been employed to deal the blow; for not more, perhaps, than one attendant would be admitted at once into the presence. Struck in the groin, but not mortally, Domitian snatched at his own weapon, but found the sword removed from the scabbard. He then clutched the assassin's dagger, cutting his own fingers to the bone; then desperately thrust the

Domitian assassinated.

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 15, 16.

bloody talons into the eyes of his assailant, and beat his head with a golden goblet, shrieking all the time for help. Thereupon rushed in Parthenius, Maximus, and others, and despatched him as he lay writhing on the pavement.[1]

The act revealed at the time to Apollonius.

That the actual occurrence of great events is at times revealed by divine intuition to seers and prophets at a distance, has been a common superstition. As this catastrophe was portended by many omens beforehand, so, according to the story, at the moment of its befalling at Rome, the sage Apollonius, the philosopher of Tyana, himself a reputed wonder-worker, had mounted an eminence in Ephesus, and there calling the people around him, had exclaimed with inspired fervour, *Well done, Stephanus! bravo, Stephanus! slay the murderer! Thou hast stricken; thou hast wounded; thou hast slain! And this is true*, declares the historian Dion; *this, I say, is true, let who will deny it.* Dion's account is identical with that of the biographer Philostratus; but from this earnest asseveration it may be inferred that it was from no single source, and no partial authority, that the historian himself had derived it. The tradition, whatever else may be its value, seems at least to point to a wide-spread animosity, or possibly a wide-spread conspiracy, against the tyrant, whose crimes after all were mostly confined to the narrow sphere of Rome, and who may not unjustly be reputed a discreet and able governor of the provinces. But Domitian had made himself enemies of the two classes who possessed the greatest power to blacken his memory. The nobles, whom he had insulted and tormented, poisoned, no

[1] Circumstantial accounts of the assassination are given by both Dion and Philostratus, which differ principally in the assertion by the one that the attendants rushed in at their master's cries, and slew Stephanus in the fray, while the other says that they helped to kill the emperor. This latter version seems to correspond with the slighter notice of Suetonius. See Philostr. *Vit. Apollon.* viii. 25.; Dion, lxvii. 18.; Suet. *Domit.* 17.

doubt, the sources of history at Rome; and the philosophers, whom he proscribed in the capital, spread their bitter feelings against him far and wide throughout the empire. I can only repeat what I have said before, that there are no facts to set against the overwhelming testimony by which Domitian is condemned; but the moral influence of the philosophers at this period was felt in every quarter, and we know that in more modern times a prince would with difficulty obtain a hearing from posterity who had given mortal offence to both his nobility and his clergy.[1]

Contrast between the heirs to the purple and the elected princes.

The busts and coins of Domitian concur in presenting us with a countenance which bears a strong family resemblance to those of the elder Flavii, coarse and plebeian, but at the same time handsome, and not without marks of intellectual power. He appears to have been vain of his person, and to have suffered much vexation from the baldness which his countrymen regarded as a serious blemish. By one indeed who affected divinity such personal defects might be felt as real disadvantages, and the affectation of divinity, partly from vanity, but still more from policy, is the key to much of the conduct of this last of an upstart dynasty. The princes who inherited imperial power are all marked with a similar impress. Caius, Nero, and Domitian, were strongly influenced by the necessity of maintaining the charm of legitimacy, in default of a personal claim, as their title to power. The right of Julius and Augustus to a primacy among the Romans, if not strictly definable, was generally admitted as the meed of genius, or beauty, or even of might. It was the will of the gods, verified by manifest desert, and placed beyond human question.

[1] Suet. *Domit.* 17.: "Occisus est quarto decimo kal. Oct." (Sept. 18. A. U. 849, A. D. 96.) Domitian was born Sept. 24, 804, and commenced his reign Sept. 13 834; he perished, therefore, at the age of forty-five; and his reign numbered fifteen years and five days. Comp. Dion, lxvii. 18.

Tiberius was the chosen of Augustus; but this reflected merit he was anxious to fortify by the sanction of the senate, the representative of the Roman patriciate. Galba and Vespasian had been formally elected by the fathers, and their patrons had sustained their choice by alleging, in token of their fitness, the divine descent of both the one and the other. These were the emperors of the senate; they maintained for the most part the interests of the order in its struggles against popular or military encroachment. But the princes who were born in the purple knew that the principle of legitimacy was obnoxious to the caste which pretended to the right of election. They saw, on the other hand, that the notion of hereditary claim, which was scarcely recognised by the old Roman law in cases even of private descent, had a peculiar charm for the mixed races which now constituted the nation, and struck a chord of sympathy wherever the artificial rules of the early republic were unknown or forgotten. Hence the legitimate princes instinctively attached themselves to the people, and entered on a career of mutual jealousy with the nobles, which, after repeated acts of repression and tyranny, always ended in their overthrow and slaughter. When Suetonius tells us that Domitian devoted himself to studying the arts of Tiberius, and made that prince his model, he is thinking only, I believe, of the deep dissimulation in which he proved so apt an imitator; but it does not seem that the later emperor, whose general policy was that of an archaic revival, followed in other respects the example of the earlier, who was a hard and logical materialist.

END OF THE SEVENTH VOLUME.

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